THE SUCCESSORS OF HOMER

THE SUCCESSORS OF HOMER

BY

W. C. LAWTON

SENIOR CLASSICAL PROFESSOR IN THE ADELPHI COLLEGE, BROOKLYN

NEW YORK

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1898

CONTENTS.

THE SUCCESSORS OF HOMER

THE SUCCESSORS OF HOMER.

PROLOGUE.

In the great panorama of literature, as of history, the chief landmarks, the brilliant epochs, stand out prominently in our memory, while the really unbroken tablelands or chains of hills between them are often unduly overlooked. Even the most general student of literature will hardly forget that, about the ninth or tenth century B.C., Homer—or the school of Homeric poets—immortalized in splendid epic verse that age of Achaian princes, which was even then passing away. Nor, again, will the trio of supreme tragic poets, who, in the fifth century B.C., so glorified their Athenian mother-city, ever become dim figures to the student of letters. But it is important also to realize that those were not merely

isolated elevations. Between Homer and Aeschylos there was probably not a single decade, perhaps not a year, when the muse of Hellas was silent. Two notable series of poems, in particular, may still be traced through the centuries that intervene, viz. the later Epic and the early Lyric.

The drama itself, indeed, developed out of a special form of lyric poetry (the Bacchic dithyramb), and lyric—which was of course really as old, in some form, as the Greek race itself—as old as love and strife among men—can actually be traced, in an unbroken succession of singers, whose works are at least partly preserved, from Callinos, at the beginning of the seventh century B.C., down to its culmination in Pindar, the contemporary of Aeschylos. We may be sure, too, that for every name still recorded a hundred minstrels are themselves "unhonoured and unsung." For centuries, before and after Callinos, they must have been as countless as the improvisatori of the Tuscan valleys. No divine festival, no harvest-home or vintage-time, no marriage, funeral, or other hour of social joy

and grief, no victory in war or in athletic strife, lacked its crown of song.

Our present task is, however, to point out, that the staider and more formal epic impulse also lasted, and the long roll of the heroic hexameter continued in wide use, for many generations after Homer. Indeed, this verse never became unfamiliar to the classic Greek ear, epitaphs in particular recurring frequently to this oldest extant form of Hellenic rhythm. The poems we shall have occasion to discuss may be grouped under general heads thus:—

A. The Cyclic Epics, written largely to complete the Trojan myth by tales introducing, connecting, and completing the two Homeric masterpieces. Of these only meagre fragments and prose summaries have been preserved.

B. The Hesiodic Poems, representing in their present form rather a school of didactic and theological poetry, than a single great singer. We, however, probably have before us, though both mutilated and interpolated, the two poems most generally accepted as authentic, and most influential, among the later ancients.

C. The Homeric Hymns, ill-fitted by adjective or noun, since none dates from the age of the Iliad: some are rather Hesiodic in tone, while nearly all are *preludes*, in each of which the rhapsode, about to recite from the great epics, first pays his devoirs to the god at whose temple or festival he is to chant the "glories of the heroes." And—

D. The Philosophic Treatises in hexameter verse, which have their earliest suggestion, indeed, in Hesiod's Theogony. Here the three chief names, all of the sixth and fifth centuries B.C., are Xenophanes, Parmenides, and Empedocles. Each is extant only in fragments; but Lucretius' splendid De Rerum Natura — masterpiece of Latin literature and of didactic verse generally — affords us a lofty consolation for their loss; and also, by the way, a noble imitation in Latin of the Greek hexameter.

Empedocles died as late as 440 B.C., and some of the Homeric hymns are doubtless later still: so the regnant period of dactylic hexameter is one of five or more centuries; not to mention the scholarly revival of the Alexandrians, which

we may call mock-archaic epic. The present volume attempts to open for the English reader this somewhat neglected page in the history of Greek literature. The space required for translations will of itself prevent much freedom of digression into the tempting fields of mythology, archaeology, and comparative religion.

I.

THE EPIC CYCLE.

THE Iliad was no doubt the culminating success in a long literary development; but it outlasted and extinguished all its predecessors. We know practically nothing of poets earlier than the author of the Iliad. In this chapter we take for granted on the reader's part a thorough familiarity with the plot of Iliad and Odyssey: such a familiarity as the Cyclic poets themselves reveal. A complete list of the lost epics may be convenient for reference in the course of the essay.

A. (1) Theogonia.
(2) Titanomachia.

B. (1) Oidipodeia.
(2) Thebais.
(3) Epigonoi.

C. (1) Kypria.
(2) (Iliad).
(3) Aethiopis.
(4) Little Iliad (Mikra Ilias).
(5) Iliou Persis.
(6) Nostoi.
(7) (Odyssey).
(8) Telegonia.

The lost epics arrange themselves into three groups, according as they deal with kosmic or world-myths, with Theban legend, and with the great tale of Troy. We pass rapidly over the first two groups of these Cyclic poems, which have less connection in plot with the Homeric story.

A. The Cyclic Theogony and Titanomachia, beginning with the wedlock of Uranos and Ge (Heaven and Earth), told the story of Creation, and of strife among immortals. Homer, by the way, makes Okeanos, not Uranos, the source of all (Il. xiv. 245, 246). Indeed we shall have occasion elsewhere to notice that Homer usually ignores, if he had heard them, the cruder tales of deadly strife, cannibalism, and mutilation among the gods. He also alludes

to the Titans below, under Tartaros (Il. xiv. 274, 275), but does not tell their story (cf. infra, pp. 79 ff.). Authors, age, length, of these two Cyclic poems are unknown or disputed, though doubtless all agree they were post-Homeric. The scanty fragments deal out such trifling information as that the sun-god's steeds are two horses and two mares, or that it was the Centaur Chiron who—

"Unto Justice guided the races of mortals, and taught them
Offerings unto the gods, and oaths, and the shapes of Olympos."

(Perhaps this Greek notion of the Centaurs as wiser than early men is a dim tradition of a horse-riding race. It will be recalled that the Homeric Greeks only drive their horses in chariots, but never mount them. The reader will remember also what amazement the Spanish riders of horses excited among the Aztecs).

This much, at any rate, we learn, even from the meagre fragments, viz. that the metre and dialect used in these Theban epics were essentially Homeric. Another single line—

"In their midst was dancing the father of men and immortals,"

indicates that the same familiar tags and half-lines recurred as in Homer—

"The father of men and immortals"

being a phrase which is repeated often in Iliad and Odyssey. For the loss of these poems we are adequately consoled by Hesiod's Theogony, which had a much greater influence on the popular Greek mythology of the following centuries.

B. The next three poems mentioned in the great Cycle are concerned with the tragic story of Thebes: the Oidipodeia, Thebais, Epigonoi. These also deal with matters touched on by Homer, though only incidentally. Odysseus, *e.g.*, saw in Hades (Odys. xi.) the ill-fated mother, and wife as well, of Oedipus, Epicaste (called afterwards, by the tragedians, Iocaste). These three Theban poems together contained twenty thousand verses, nearly twice as much as the Odyssey. Herodotos, citing the Epigonoi, expresses merely a passing doubt if Homer wrote it (Herod. ix. 32). From the Oidipodeia we have

almost nothing. The first line of the Thebais was—

"Sing, O goddess, of waterless Argos, whence the commanders . . ."

From another source we have a more valuable fragment. Athenaeus, amid his usual trivial gossip (bk. xi. p. 465 E), has preserved a striking passage, as to a sort of family "Luck of Edenhall," which Oedipus curses his sons for setting before him.

"Yet the divinely descended hero, the fair Polyneikes,
First at Oedipus' side made ready the beautiful table,
Silvern, of Cadmos wise as the gods, and straightway upon it
Poured for him sweet wine in a golden beautiful goblet.
Yet when he perceived at his side that cup of his father—
Precious, in reverence held—great woe came over his spirit.
Instantly then upon both of his sons he uttered his curses
Never to be escaped,—and the wrath of the gods was awakened—
Wishing that they might never in amity share their possessions:
Ever between them twain might strife and battle continue."

No other classical author, I believe, alludes to this legend of the goblet: but this one passage

will suffice to show that we have lost here a large mass of valuable and independent poetic and mythologic material, in age and interest a respectable rival of the Iliad.

The story of both the Thebais and the Epigonoi is alluded to in a famous passage of the Iliad, where Agamemnon reproaches Diomedes and Sthenelos as slothful and cowardly compared with their sires, and recalls especially Tydeus, Diomedes' father, who had visited Mykenae with the banished Theban prince, Polyneikes (Il. iv. 372–410). Sthenelos (not, as is so often said, his mightier friend) answers haughtily—

"Verily we make claim to be mightier far than our fathers,
We who captured the hold of Thebes with the sevenfold portals,
Leading a lesser array beneath those bulwarks of Ares,
Putting our trust in the aid of Zeus and the Heaven-sent portents:
Whereas, they, our sires, by their own impiety perished."

The passage sounds as if Homer's audience were already familiar with the tale of Thebes, perhaps through earlier epic masters; for this Theban

legend, it is thought probable, may have been treated by poets before Homer. This is not unlikely. In this very passage, even, the poet may be speaking a bold word for his own heroes, as against the favourites of an earlier lay. Probably no one supposes any of the fragments now extant, or even any of the poems as read by the later ancients, were pre-Homeric. The exact truth as to these things, however, can no longer be descried in the "dark backward and abysm of time."

All the three great Attic tragedians have left us notable plays that draw their material from the Theban myths, and doubtless from these very epics, viz. The Seven against Thebes, of Aeschylos (sole survivor of a Theban tetralogy); the trio of noble Sophoclean plays, in all of which Antigone and Creon appear; and, lastly, Euripides' more melodramatic and over-ingenious Phoenissae. Indeed, the whole Epic Cycle was a favourite source of materials for the Attic dramatists. But we must hasten on to the Trojan epics proper.

These latter poems were, as we have said,

written for the most part, apparently, in avowed supplementary relation to the Iliad and Odyssey. They may have drawn somewhat upon a popular and traditional mass of myth which Homer had not exhausted; but most students get the impression that they are chiefly more or less ingenious developments from incidents or allusions in the older epics themselves. The younger poems are known to us principally through the prose summaries of an otherwise untraceable Proclos—but only so far as he is quoted in the Literary Miscellany of the Byzantine Photios,—partly through unnamed scholiasts upon Homer and other poets. (So fragmentary, and at third or fourth hand, is our knowledge of this whole Cycle, and of many another literary epoch or artistic school!) Perhaps the chief importance of these lost epics, now, is as evidence that the Iliad and Odyssey had in the eighth century B.C. reached essentially their present form and contents. Thus the insults to Hector's body by Achilles in Il. xxiv., the meeting of Achilles and Priam, the wanderings of Telemachos in Odys. i.–iv.—that is, the

latest additions, according to modern critics, attached to Iliad and Odyssey by younger hands, —are apparently imitated in these early supplements. The manner in which the latter attach themselves to the older epics points in the same direction. This relation to Homer should be kept constantly in mind while the Cyclic poems are discussed.

The Kypria described the events preceding the story of the Iliad. It was, indeed, planned expressly to present a more adequate account of the causes and incidents leading up to the famous strife. The favourite legend made this poem also Homer's own composition, but stated that it was bestowed as a gift upon his son-in-law, the Cypriote Stasinos, who was apparently to recite it as his own. This explanation may have been an attempt to compromise between conflicting claims as to the authorship. That the poem was really of Cyprian origin is, of course, a natural conjecture, at least.

Herodotos (ii. 117) asserts confidently that the poem is "not Homer's, but some one's else; for in the Kypria it is stated that, on the third day

out from Sparta, Alexander reached Ilios with Helen, having had a fair wind and smooth sea; whereas the poet of the Iliad says that he wandered about with her." Herodotos had just quoted the allusion (Il. vi. 290–292) to the—

"Work of Sidonian women, whom Alexander the god-like
Brought from Sidon along, as the widewayed waters he traversed,
Homeward sailing to Troy with Helena, daughter of princes."

Herodotos shows here his usual good judgment in literary criticism; nevertheless, in our prose summary of the Kypria (Kinkel, Fragmenta Epicorum, p. 18) we read: "Hera sends a storm upon them, and Alexander, being driven to Sidon, takes the city." This may well be a late interpolation in the Kypria itself—or merely in the summary—suggested by the famous and trenchant criticism of Herodotos. Doubtless, in many such details the less illustrious poems may have been forced into agreement with the accepted masterpieces, when the Cycle was reduced to order. Indeed, our chief informant and summarist, Proclos, remarks that the Cyclic epics were

preserved and studied "more for their consecutive treatment of incidents than for their intrinsic merit."

The tale of *eleven* books credited to the Kypria indicates about 5000–7000 hexameter verses: for these Alexandrian divisions into books were largely for mechanical convenience in rolling the scrolls. The eccentric number, eleven, may have arisen when one was later trimmed away, apparently the last, which probably coincided too closely with the opening of the Iliad.

This poet probably invented, or at least first recorded, the story of the strife for the apple and the choice of Paris as umpire. From the Kypria, or at any rate under its influence, was probably interpolated into the Iliad the only allusion to those incidents, viz. the awkward and ill-placed verses, Il. xxiv. 29–30.

The opening lines of the Kypria are preserved in a somewhat corrupt form.

"Once on a time was Earth by the races of men made weary,
Who were wandering numberless over the breadth of her bosom.
Zeus with pity beheld it, and took in his wise heart counsel

How to relieve of her burden the Earth, life-giver to all things,
Fanning to flame that terrible struggle, the war upon Troia.
So should the burden by death be removed: and they in the Troad
Perished—the heroes; the counsel of Zeus was brought to fulfilment."

Here our informant—it is the scholiast on the opening verses of the Iliad—suddenly breaks off. He has given us just enough, however, to show how skilfully the new portico was adjusted to the old Homeric temple. The fifth line of the Iliad also closes—

"The counsel of Zeus was brought to fulfilment,"

and he who read the Kypria first would now understand the Iliad's opening passage to refer back to this earlier and larger "plan of Zeus." The scene at Aulis where the serpent devours the sparrow and her young, alluded to in Il. i., was given in full in the Kypria. Such incidents, and traits like Nestor's garrulity, seem like elaborated cross-references, as it were, devised between the epics.

Still, new incidents occur which hardly agree with Homer. In particular, Helen is stated, in an extant fragment, to have been the daughter of Zeus *and Nemesis*, so not mortal on either side. Polydeukes, her brother, is also immortal, whereas in Homer both he and Castor are already "covered by earth, in Lacedaemon."

Especially interesting is Achilles' desire to behold Helen, whereupon Aphrodite and Thetis bring these two glorious creatures into each other's presence. On the one hand this seems to point back toward Homer's equally bold—and dramatically better justified — conjunction of Achilles and Priam in his closing scenes. On the other side it is the first hint of the later feeling that made Achilles and Helen alike deathless, and united the two supreme types of youthful beauty in eternal wedlock.

The name and doom of Iphigenia, the tale of Philoctetes and the snake, with many another favourite tragic subject, first appear, so far as we know, in the Kypria. Just how the poem ended, and how closely it was attached to the Iliad, is not stated. Among the last incidents

noticed in the summary are the captures of Briseis and Chryseis, as also a special "counsel of Zeus" to withdraw Achilles from the Greek alliance and relieve the Trojans. This repetition of the fateful words has, even in the dry prosaic outline, somewhat the effect of a solemn refrain. Last of all is noted "a catalogue of the Trojans' allies." This, of course, now stands in our Iliad (ii. 816–877), where its authenticity has been often attacked. It may be a late loan from the Kypria, and its transfer may have accompanied, or caused, the suppression of a twelfth book in the Kypria itself.

Thus far we have depended chiefly upon Proclos' outlines. The fragments which have been transmitted to us give little further aid in reconstructing the poem. One verse from the Kypria became a very famous maxim in later days, grimly Machiavelian though it is, reappearing in Aristotle, Polybios, and others,—

"Foolish is he who, slaying the father, spareth his children."

Homer's praises of wine are echoed by this later

singer, who had evidently wedded his master's muse, if not his daughter—

"Wine in truth, Menelaos, the gods for men who are mortal
Best amid all their blessings accorded, to scatter their sorrows."

The largest single passage surviving describes the transformations of Nemesis when flying from the love of Zeus. She flees—

"Sometimes under the wave of the sea with its thunderous billows,
Sometimes unto the bounds of earth and the river of Ocean,
Sometimes over the land with its fertile meadows; and ever
Shapes of all earthly beasts she assumed, in the hope to escape him."

We certainly get the impression that this union, and the consequent divine origin of Helen, held a prominent place in the story. It was, perhaps, the boldest addition to the Homeric tradition.

Even in this scant handful of fragments, however, the pre-eminent activity of Aphrodite, suzerain of Cyprus, fully appears. Athenaeus, naming the flowers suitable for garlands, quotes

the verses of "Hegesias or Stasinos or whoever the poet was"—

"Garments upon her body she put, that the Hours and the Graces
Fashioned, and dipt for her in flowers that grow in the Springtime,
Such as the season brings: in the crocus and hyacinth blossom,
Clustering violets too, and the beautiful flowers of the roses—
Sweet, unto nectar like,—and the cups of the lily ambrosial,
With the narcissus . . . so Aphrodite
Garments wore that with odours of every flower were fragrant."

Still more clearly does the queen of love glimmer upon us in the verses,—

"Aphrodite, delighting in laughter, amid her attendants
Out of the odorous flowers of the earth was plaiting her garlands."

It is but a tantalizing parting glimpse that is accorded us, however, as she passes we know not whither, by Nymphs and Graces attended—

"Sweetly singing adown Mount Ida abounding in fountains."

If this gleaning seems meagre, the English reader may at least rest assured that we have

now set before him almost every scrap which has drifted to us in metrical form. The frequent allusions to the Kypria, throughout the centuries of later Hellenism, give us no material to restore the lost verses.

Even so bare an outline of the Kypria, and of the other Cyclic epics, will throw an important light on such statements as that of Aeschylos, that his dramas were "crumbs from the great banquet of Homer." Yet it is certain that the plots of the Iliad and Odyssey themselves were rarely dramatized in Athens. They would not "crumble" effectively, as Aristotle asserts. Aeschylos, if the incident be authentic at all, doubtless used the term "Homer" in the wider sense. (Nearly every prehistoric Greek poem was once popularly ascribed to the one supreme bard.) Athenaeus (277 E) expressly says of *Sophocles*, that he delighted to draw his subjects from the Epic Cycle. The general truth of this remark can still be demonstrated; but, of course, the exact extent of the dramatist's debt to this and other sources can rarely be indicated in detail. The true artist has but one rule, to

borrow wherever he finds what he needs, and to recast no less freely, until the material seems originally intended for the place where he sets it. Not merely, however, as the favourite quarry of tragic poets and other artists, but for its own creative power and beauty, we would gladly have restored to us this lost epic of unknown,—or at least disputed,—authorship. Of this there is little hope, though the Egyptian discoveries of recent years make all things seem possible.

The Kypria, then, as we have seen, was added, not unfittingly, as a stately portico of song, introductory to the older epic. It was much more evident, however, that the Iliad needed a sequel, rather than an introduction. Readers of the Iliad in every age must feel that the doom of Achilles and the fall of the guilty city are most effective subjects, yet awaiting their minstrel. In a later age, Virgil's second book of the Aeneid has nobly supplied the latter scene, and the Latin poet has not failed to link his incidents unmistakably to the earlier narrative. Such a continuation was first composed, however, by Arctinos of Miletos, in the early

Olympiads, *i.e.* in the eighth century B.C. The ancients were quite well agreed as to this poet's name and age. That he, like the author of the Kypria, found our Iliad in its present form is pretty clearly indicated by the fact that he—or else whoever finally arranged the Cycle—even altered Homer's closing line. The Iliad ends—

"So they made ready the grave for Hector, the tamer of horses."

The Greek scholiast on this final verse remarks: "Some write,—

'So they made ready the grave for Hector: the Amazon straightway
Came, who was daughter to Ares, the haughty destroyer of heroes.'"

This transitional passage is curiously illustrated in various works of art. For instance, the widowed Andromache, still holding her funereal urn, is seen in the group which welcomes the arrival of the Amazon queen.

About a century later still, the Lesbian poet Lesches wrote his Little Iliad, probably a rival poem to that of Arctinos, and covering essentially

the same ground, viz. the whole tale from Hector's funeral to the sack of the city. But the later hand, whatever and whenever it may have been, that forced all these poems into a more perfect sequence of historical events—at the cost, as Proclos intimates, of their poetic value, seems to have culled from each lesser poem the portion which was considered most effective. Hence, in our summary, the Cycle is thus continued after (2) the Iliad.

(3) Aethiopis, by *Arctinos*, in five books, closing in the midst of Ajax' strife with Odysseus for the armour of the dead Achilles.

(4) Little Iliad of *Lesches*, in four books, beginning with Odysseus' victory, in the strife for the armour, and Ajax' suicide, ending with the reception of the wooden horse into the town.

(5) Destruction of Ilios, in two books, again by *Arctinos*, exactly joining on here (!) with the debate of the Trojans what to do with the horse, and ending with the departure of the Greeks for home, under Athene's displeasure.

Of course it is quite incredible, and indeed absurd, that Arctinos should have left any such

ragged gap in his work, or between his works, to be filled by a man of alien race three generations later; nor can we believe that both his Aethiopis and the Little Iliad stopped in the midst of most absorbing crises! The explanation, which we gave beforehand, is generally accepted by students, and is made nearly certain by the extant fragments of both poems. These do not, in either case, as we shall see, confine themselves to the limits so artificially set for them in the Cycle. Let us now study the three poems in succession somewhat more closely.

The Aethiopis, whether a separate poem or, as I believe, a mere portion of Arctinos' work, was chiefly occupied with Achilles' last two exploits—the slaying of the Amazon queen, Penthesilea, and, finally, of Memnon the Ethiopian, son of Eos the Dawn-goddess. Both these gallant figures will be recalled as among the frescoes, or reliefs, on Dido's palace walls (Aen. i. 489–491). These pictures have always impressed me with a startling vividness hardly equalled elsewhere in the Aeneid. Virgil may be describing some series of panels well-known to him and to his courtly auditors.

The tragic fate and youthful beauty of Penthesilea and Memnon made them favourite subjects for every art. In the Aethiopis Achilles falls in love with Penthesilea—perhaps after killing her,—and slays Thersites for jeering at his passion. Of this passage Schiller betrays his ignorance by a fine verse—

"Patroclus liegt begraben, und Thersites kommt rurück!"

The incident looks, in our summary of the Aethiopis, like a bold embroidery on Homer's statement that Thersites "especially railed at" Achilles among other chieftains. The striking adjective "Hephaistos-fashioned," applied in the prose outline of Aethiopis to Memnon's panoply, probably indicates a closer imitation of a familiar Homeric passage; and is, so far, a broad hint, also, that the passage in question—viz. the detailed account of Achilles' shield, generally considered a late addition to the Iliad—was already in the text of Homer. In the Aethiopis the slaying of Achilles is accomplished at the Scaean gate by Apollo and Paris, just as the dying Hector had foretold in the Iliad. The reliance of this poem

upon motifs drawn from the Iliad is indeed especially clear and constant. *E.g.* Nestor's son Antilochos takes Patroclos' place in some degree; and Antilochos' death leads up to Memnon's, much as Patroclos' fall hastened the doom of Hector. Again, Ajax bears Achilles' body out of the fray to the ships, reminding us of the close of Il. xvii., where Patroclos' corpse is similarly rescued.

The coming of Thetis, with her sisters and the Muses, to mourn for Achilles, was needed here, and the very similar account which appears so unexpectedly in Odys. xxiv.—where Agamemnon's ghost describes to Achilles, after so many years, the latter's own funeral—may itself be borrowed, later, from this passage. This mention of the Muses' presence, also, at the funeral rites, tempts us to bring up once again the question, why Achilles in life, alone among the heroes, holds the lyre and sings "the glories of men." Is it an audacious hint by the courtly bards that the lyre is in truth as honourable as the prince's sword itself? They would hardly have dared proclaim more openly, like Clough, that—

"Hundreds of heroes fought and fell
That Homer in the end might tell!"

The only sustained passage extant from the Aethiopis is a very curious one of eight lines, describing two brothers, physicians, one especially skilled in heroic surgery, the other in therapeutics and, above all, in diagnosis—

"He was the first, indeed, to perceive the frenzy of Ajax,
Seeing his eyes that darted fire, and the gloom of his spirit."

It is very possible that the death of Achilles, dragging Ajax, as it were, into the grave after him, through the fatal contest for the divine armour, formed either an important crisis in Arctinos' work, or even the finale of a poem complete in itself. These closing scenes in the young Homeric hero's life have had a great power and attraction for dramatic or epic poets in all ages. Von Christ remarks that even Goethe has taken his place as latest of the Homerids by his (unfinished) Achilleis. Like his forerunners, the German poet drew his inspiration and suggestions chiefly from the Iliad. Some of his original touches are demonstrably anti-Homeric, yet we have reason to regret that the experiment was

so soon abandoned. It is a mere fragment—left so for half a lifetime, like Browning's projected tragedy on Hippolytos.

A scholiast on Pindar tells us that the poet of the Aethiopis made Ajax "slay himself at dawn." But the death of Ajax, according to Proclos' anatomical divisions, came not in the Aethiopis at all, but in the Little Iliad. Still more clearly effective in breaking down these absurd partitions is a famous passage of Aristotle (Poetics, xxiii. p. 1459 A), where, contrasting the masterly simplicity of plot in the Homeric poems with the crowded events in these supplements, he says one or two dramas only have ever been carved out of Iliad or Odyssey, but from the Aethiopis many, and from the Little Iliad "more than eight;" and in his following list are included *Sinon*, *Destruction of Troy*, and *The Setting Sail*, all evident encroachments on the latter of the two sections assigned by Proclos to Arctinos. Indeed, one of these plays, the *Destruction of Troy* (Iliou Persis), though drawn from Lesches' Little Iliad, had precisely the title given to Arctinos' closing poem! It is also evident by

this time that the arrangement of the Cycle in its Proclean—one is tempted to say, instead, Procrustean—shape was a comparatively late one, since Herodotos, the dramatists, and Aristotle knew the several poems in their unabridged form with all their contradictions and overlappings. The Little Iliad really announces a larger theme than does the elder poem. The opening couplet may be rendered in literal prose—

"Ilios I sing, and Dardania rich in colts,
For which the Danai, servants of Ares, much endured."

It has been remarked that the opening word may have suggested the name "Iliad;" that it was first applied to this poem, and only later transferred to the greater epic. This must always remain a mere conjecture. This exordium, quoted for us in a life of Homer falsely attributed to Herodotos, had probably been trimmed away in the Proclean recension of the whole Epic Corpus.

The longest passage from the Little Iliad now remaining is but five lines; interesting to lovers of Hector and his family as recording the fate of his boy—

"Then the illustrious son of the noble-hearted Achilles
Down to the hollowed vessels the widow of Hector conducted.
As for the child, from the breast of the fair-tressed servant he tore him,
Grasped by the feet, and hurled him down from the tower; and upon him
Crimson death as he fell laid hold—and a destiny ruthless."

The poet is, however, clearly not following any fixed popular tradition, or other authority, but merely attempting to work out Homer's hint at Il. xxiv. 735, where Andromache expresses her fear that her boy will meet some such fate in the sack of the city. Indeed these lines of the Little Iliad are all closely imitated from this and various other Homeric passages (cf. especially iii. 189; v. 26; vi. 467; i. 591, and v. 83). The fine closing verse, in fact, occurs thrice, without change, in the Iliad! This passage, too, was probably trimmed away altogether at that comparatively late period when the Cycle was forced into continuous and consistent form. The whole story of the embarkation was then assigned to the next poem, the Iliou Persis.

Moreover, the Proclean synopsis of that rival

poem, the Iliou Persis, or "Sack of Troy," expressly makes Odysseus—not Neoptolemos—slay Astyanax. All such evidence strengthens our general impression, that each succeeding poet is an inventive artist, piecing his own conceptions upon the Homeric fabric, rather than merely versifying a familiar tradition. My own feeling (already voiced elsewhere) is that the Iliad, effacing the memory of the early literary attempts on the same theme, and also of the popular tradition on which they were doubtless in some degree built, remained essentially the only source of inspiration or suggestion for later minstrels.

Whether the two poems ascribed to Arctinos are but sections of an original single work, can hardly be determined with certainty. Most students are convinced that, at any rate, there was no gap consciously left between them. The Iliou Persis, however, in Proclos' summary, begins with the debate, "What shall be done with the wooden horse?" Only *one* of Laocoön's sons is slain with their father by the serpents in this, our oldest, account. This version, though not followed by Virgil, is quite reconcilable with the grouping in

the famous piece of sculpture, and is, I believe, mentioned by Lessing in his essay "Laocoön." If this son alone had joined in his father's warning against the horse, his fate, and his brother's escape, would make the deceptive portent all the more convincing. Horrified at this event (the summary continues), Aeneas and his following withdrew to Ida—before the sack began. This is hardly reconcilable with the statement quoted from the Little Iliad, that Aeneas shared Andromache's captivity under Neoptolemos. Indeed, these variations show once more that the poets had usually no data before them save the incomplete hints in Homer. Where he fails them they disagree hopelessly. In the Iliad the prophecy is merely that Aeneas and his posterity shall rule "over the Trojans." Perhaps it is merely chance that no locality is added. We suppose Homer was flattering a race then ruling in the Troad. Presumably in Lesches' time any such occasion for courtly adulation had passed away.

The general picture of the city's fall, with the escape of Aeneas, death of Priam and Polyxena,

and more bitter fate of Cassandra, Hecabè, Andromache, and the rest, is especially familiar to every student of literature, from Virgil, from spectacular Attic tragedies like Euripides' Troades, etc. There is also a remarkably fine vase-painting, most conveniently accessible, perhaps, in Baumeister (Tafel xiv.), which may remind us how dominant an influence this myth exercised upon the plastic arts as well as in literature. These stately figures and groups, in spirit high above the humble form in which they appear, are evidently reproductions, more or less remote, after masterpieces of sculpture and painting. A comparison of this with the Tabula Iliaca (Baumeister, Tafel xiii.), will show graphically how, in the sixth century, the Sicilian poet Stesichoros (the authority cited upon the Tabula Iliaca), was already drawing Aeneas, the supposed founder of Sicilian Eryx and Segesta, into the central position which is later claimed for him as the ancestor of the Romans.

There is no hope that French excavators at Delphi will recover the greatest artistic treatment of this grim theme of Troy's downfall, viz. the

painting by Polygnotos in the Lesche, so elaborately described in Pausanias.*

The last works on our list must be given even more superficial treatment. (6) The Nostoi, or "Return of the Heroes," is credited with five books. It fits excellently just before (7) the Odyssey, being, as it were, summarized Odys. i. 11, 12.

"Then all others, as many as fled from fearful destruction,
Home were come, and escaped from the dangers of war and the waters."

The author, Hagios, is usually assigned to Troizene, in the Argolid. This is perhaps an indication of late date, as the earlier epic school is on the eastern side of the Aegean. It will be remembered how the varying lists of Homer's birth-places all bring him progressively westward across the Archipelago. The subject of the Nostoi lacked unity and absorbing interest. It seems to have many points of contact with

* Since these words were written, the pitiful ruins of the Lesche have been uncovered, and our prophecy is fully justified.

the early books of the Odyssey; but some portions of Menelaos' and Nestor's narratives, in particular, may be actually borrowed from the Nostoi into the present text of Homer. Some scholars believe that Odysseus' adventures were included too, but that seems unlikely. Rather, the intention to fit the poem into the place before the Odyssey is often indicated; for instance, by the incident, that Neoptolemos, returning home by land across Thrace, meets Odysseus at Maroneia, a place mentioned by Homer also. (Cf. Odys. ix. 40, 196.) No interesting fragments of the Nostoi have been preserved. The only complete verses transmitted to us allude to an earlier myth—the famous rejuvenation of Jason's father by Medeia:—

"Aeson straightway a lovely and vigorous stripling she rendered,
Causing the marks of age by her cunning devices to vanish,
Boiling many medicinal herbs in golden cauldrons."

(In later poetry the malicious enchantress refuses to utter the life-restoring charm.)

This statement just made, as to the lack of interesting fragments, is equally true of (8)

the Telegonia, in two books, by Eugammon of Cyrene,—latest in time, last in subject, and perhaps least in poetic attractiveness, among the Trojan epics. Indeed, not a line of this poem is preserved. Beginning with the burial of the suitors, it was, without doubt, an avowed appendix to the Odyssey. We gather from the summary that Odysseus' later wanderings and loves, prophesied by Teiresias in Odys. xi., were by no means world-wide, but confined closely to Greece, and, indeed, to the neighbouring mainland. The far more impressive story of Odysseus' last voyage to the Antipodes, related by his ghost in the Dantesque Inferno, has not, I believe, been traced to any early source. The hero of the Telegonia, Telegonos, is Odysseus' son, by Circe. In his quest for his father—which, by the way, is clearly an imitation of Telemachos' wanderings—he lands in Ithaca, and unwittingly slays Odysseus. With the body he carries off, to Circe's isle, the widowed Penelope, and also Telemachos. Here the curtain falls upon a bit of melodrama, whereby both Odysseus' widows are happily consoled—for Telegonos weds

Penelope and Telemachos Circe! The rich vintage of Homeric wine is running lees indeed.

Of course, at the close of such a survey as this we return to the depressing consciousness, that a lost Cycle leaves only tantalizing fragments and insoluble problems behind it. Nevertheless, as the chief source of the plots for Attic tragedy, and doubtless in very large degree for later plastic art and painting as well, these works deserve at least passing attention. Originally built about the statelier shapes of the Iliad and Odyssey, they have crumbled away under the hand of time, like the Byzantine and Mohammedan walls which for a while disfigured the statelier outlines of the Phidian Parthenon. Such glimpses into vanished literatures tempt us to apply to authors, extant and forgotten, the lines which the poet in Thanatopsis has uttered of mankind in general—

> "All that tread
> The globe are but a handful to the tribes
> That slumber in its bosom."

NOTE.—The chief work of research on this subject is still Welcker's Der Epische Cyclus, a rather ponderous German book of the last generation. The reliefs, which with other plastic art throw important light on the Cycle, are best treated in Otto Jahn's Griechische Bilderchroniken. See also Baumeister's Denkmäler, i. pp. 317, 716, etc. A good outline of the plots, and exhaustively thorough discussion as to the age, of the Cyclic poems is found in Jevons's "History of Greek Literature," pp. 54–61 and 61–69. For the fragments themselves, the classical student will consult Kinkel, Fragmenta Epicorum Graecorum (Teubner).

II.

THE WORKS AND DAYS.

THE ancients believed that the Greek cities of Asia Minor were colonies, founded from the little peninsula which they regarded as the original home of their race. Modern scholars have generally accepted this view, though Professor Curtius dissents strongly. This tide of eastward emigration began, we are told, nearly a century after the Trojan war. Accordingly, the Homeric poems themselves give no hint of Greek cities in Asia in Priam's day. On the contrary, the forces of all the East are arrayed on the Trojan side as allies, so far as they are mentioned at all.

Professor Jebb, with many other scholars, is confident that these colonies took with them to Asia the Homeric poems—not, to be sure, in their

present form, but in an advanced stage of their development. This does not necessarily antagonize the prevailing ancient belief, that "Homer" was a native of Asia—Smyrna, Chios, and Colophon being, perhaps, the foremost claimants as his mother-city. The name Homer may be assigned, perhaps, to the later epic artist who gave the Iliad its present general form. Such episodes as those of Glaucos and Sarpedon are thought to show most clearly Asiatic origin and local pride. Yet the Olympian abode of gods and Muses, the birth of Achilles in Phthia, with many minor indications, certainly point to Thessaly as the earliest home of "Homeric" epic.

Colonies often have a more rapid growth to wealth and culture than the parent-land. Miletos, Smyrna, Samos, far outstripped the mother-cities of Greece. Whatever we think of Homer, certainly the later Cyclic Epic, literary lyric, and early philosophy all arose chiefly in Asia Minor.

Now, Hesiod is doubly interesting as the first Greek poet of whose localized existence we have authentic knowledge, and, further, from the fact

that he represents a back-current of Asiatic culture, returning to the comparatively rude, primeval, undeveloped mother-land. The personality of the Homeric poet or poets evades us completely. Hesiod, a homely unheroic figure, is naïvely and plainly revealed to us, dwelling in his humble village home at Boeotian Ascra.

The ancient lives of Hesiod are for the most part, like those of Homer, silly and contradictory fabrications. Their few trustworthy details they gleaned, as we may do, almost wholly from his pastoral poem, the Works and Days (Ἔργα καὶ Ἡμέραι), that is, "Rustic Tasks, and a Calendar of fit and unfit days for their performance." Hesiod's father had emigrated back to Ascra, under Mount Helicon, from Kymè, in Northwestern Asia Minor (a town doubly illustrious—on the one hand as the especial legatee of Trojan myth and stock, and on the other as the parent of Cumae, oldest of Greek colonies in Italy).

> "Ascra, in Winter vile, most villainous
> In Summer, and at no time glorious,"

the unfilial poet calls the village which was

probably his birthplace. Strabo, to be sure, says Hesiod was born in Kymè before this return of his family. This is, however, contradicted in our present text, at ver. 650, where the poet says he never went to sea. We shall return to this passage (*infra*, p. 71).

Of his life as a shepherd on Helicon, where the Muses appear to him, we have a pleasing glimpse in the companion-poem, the Theogony. The nine sisters put in his hand a branch of laurel, and bid him sing the race of the gods immortal. Though no voyager, he seems to have wandered widely by land. In Locris, and again in Orchomenos, his tomb was shown—a curious pendant to the many claimants for Homer's birthplace.

Herodotos, in a famous chapter (bk. ii. § 53), mentions Hesiod and Homer together (putting Hesiod first), and says he judges they lived four hundred years, "and not more," before his time. Hesiod is, however, undoubtedly later than Homer, whom he often imitates; and this opinion of Herodotos, pointing to the latter half of the ninth century B.C., probably indicates somewhat

too early a date for Hesiod. Still his metre and dialect show that he is yet under the epic influence only. Now, Ionian lyric arose as a literary art early in the seventh century B.C., and one of the earliest lyric poets, Simonides of Amorgos, has plainly copied Hesiod. The passage is a proverbial one in tone, it is true, but the words are so nearly the same that it appears to be merely a conscious recasting of Hesiod's thought in the new iambic metre. Hesiod had said, in dactyls,—

"Never a man hath won him a nobler prize than a woman—
If she be good; but, again, there is naught else worse than a bad one."

And Simonides echoes—

"Naught better than a woman one can win,
If she be noble; but, if bad, naught worse."

These data may fix, approximately, the poet's age. A rather belated and second-rate epic poet of about the eighth century B.C., then, Hesiod has still a unique charm. He gives us our first glimpse of humble village life in that sequestered

Boeotian land from which Pindar and Plutarch were also to spring in later centuries. Both his chief poems have come down to us in unsatisfactory condition. I shall try to give as full an outline of them as is possible in brief space, especially illustrating the sudden and ungraceful transitions and gaps between the parts. In some cases this may indicate mere rustic awkwardness. In other passages the attempt has probably been made, chiefly by later hands, to dovetail into the larger frame complete independent poems, hymns, etc., or striking fragments thereof, which may often really belong to Hesiod or his school, but not to their present places, where they fit—as the Germans say—"like a fist on the eye"!

The poem commonly known as the "Works and Days" is dedicated, or largely devoted, to Hesiod's ungracious brother Perses, who, by bribery of the judges, had secured the lion's share in the family patrimony. He is, however, again reduced by indolence and folly to utter poverty, and has appealed for help to the more prosperous poet. The latter had nothing to bestow on his kinsman save caustic and comfortless

advice. The jerkiest turns of the verse are when, from time to time, it occurs to the loving brother that it is time to admonish Perses once more.

The very first ten lines may be an independent hymn, perhaps, to Zeus. The poem opens thus—

"Muses who came from Pieria, giving renown by your singing,
Come ye, and tell us of Zeus, and chant to the praise of the Father:
His, who to mortal men has apportioned fame or oblivion;
Named or nameless are they by the will of Zeus the eternal" (Works and Days, vers. 1–4).

Indeed this might well find a place among the Homeric Hymns, where only one brief poem is actually dedicated to Zeus, though we are positively told, by so early and eminent authority as Pindar, that such preludes were oftenest composed in his honour. But from—

"Zeus who thunders on high, in his lofty palace abiding"
(Ibid., ver. 8),

Hesiod suddenly turns away—

"Hearken and heed and behold, and righteously govern thy judgments,
Thou: but I unto Perses would utter a word that is truthful!" (Ibid., vers. 9, 10).

Yet the admonition, when it comes, is but a rather metaphysical discussion upon the two sorts of strife or contention—noble Emulation and base Jealousy. Both are personified, in true Greek fashion, and sisters; elder and younger daughters of Night. No trait was, indeed, more familiar in Hellenic character than jealousy. It is the one baser alloy constantly touched on even in Pindar's golden songs of praise. Pindar, himself, was evidently kept awake by the rustling laurels of Simonides. As Hesiod says presently—

"Even the potter is jealous of potter, and craftsman of craftsman;
Even the beggar is grudging to beggar, and poet to poet!"
(Ibid., vers. 25, 26.)

This last passage is quoted by Plato, and repeatedly by Aristotle. The fraternal sermon runs on—

"But do thou store these lessons away in thy memory, Perses!
Let not Contention, the lover of mischief, withhold thee from labour,
While in the market-place thou art hearkening, eager for quarrels" (Ibid., vers. 27–29).

". . . Once we our heritage shared already. Cajoling the rulers,
Men who were greedy for bribes, and were willing to grant you the judgment,
You then plundered and carried away far more than your portion.
Fools were they, unaware how the whole by a half is exceeded,
Little they know how great is the blessing with mallow and lentils" (Ibid., vers. 37–41).

This last is the typical food of the poor and of rustics. Lovers of Horace will remember these greens as his favourite food—save when invited to Maecenas' banquets,—and Herrick is equally sincere in his devotion to the—

"mess
Of water-cress."

But it must be confessed these dainties are here forced rather suddenly, and awkwardly, upon the

corrupt judges. Yet a still bolder turn is at hand. Hesiod continues—

"Truly the gods keep hid from mortals the means of existence:
Else, in a single day, thou well might'st win by thy labour
What would suffice for a year, although thou idle remainest.
Ended soon were the labours of toilsome mules and of oxen" (Ibid., vers. 42–46).

This pessimistic and ignoble opinion of the gods introduces, naturally enough, the tale of Prometheus' deceitful sacrifice, and of Zeus' consequent wrath. The theft of fire—which had been withheld to punish man—is merely touched on, and the story (which is here hardly more relevant), of Pandora, with her fatal curiosity, is told in full detail. That Hesiod invented the entire story is unlikely, but this is its first appearance in extant literature. In offering a rendering of the passage, no attempt can be made to discuss questions of "interpolation," "double redaction," etc.

"Zeus, in the wrath of his heart, hath hidden the means of subsistence,—
Wrathful because he once was deceived by the wily Prometheus.

Therefore it was he devised most grievous troubles for mortals.
Fire he hid: yet that, for men, did the gallant Prometheus
Steal, in a hollow reed, from the dwelling of Zeus the Adviser,
Nor was he seen by the ruler of gods, who delights in the thunder.
Then, in his rage at the deed, cloud-gathering Zeus did address him:
'Iapetionides, in cunning greater than any,
Thou in the theft of fire and deceit of me art exulting,
—Source of regret for thyself, and for men who shall be hereafter.
I, in the place of fire, will give them a bane, so that all men
May in spirit exult, and find in their misery comfort!'
Speaking thus, loud laughed he, the father of gods and of mortals.
Then he commanded Hephaistos, the cunning artificer, straightway
Mixing water and earth, with speech and force to endow it,
Making it like in face to the gods whose life is eternal.
Virginal, winning, and fair was the shape: and he ordered Athene
Skilful devices to teach her, the beautiful works of the weaver.
Then did he bid Aphrodite the golden endow her with beauty,
Eager desire, and passion that wasteth the bodies of mortals.

Hermes, guider of men, the destroyer of Argus, he ordered,
Lastly, a shameless mind to bestow, and a treacherous nature.
So did he speak. They obeyed lord Zeus, who is offspring of Kronos.
Straightway, out of the earth, the renowned artificer fashioned
One like a shame-faced maid, at the will of the ruler of Heaven.
Girdle and ornaments added the bright-eyed goddess Athene.
Over her body the Graces divine and noble Persuasion
Hung their golden chains; and the Hours with beautiful tresses
Wove her garlands of flowers that bloom in the season of springtime.
All her adornment Pallas Athene fitted upon her.
Into her bosom, Hermes the guide, the destroyer of Argus,
Falsehood, treacherous thoughts, and a thievish nature imparted:
Such was the bidding of Zeus who heavily thunders; and, lastly,
Hermes, herald of gods, endowed her with speech, and the woman
Named Pandora, because all gods who dwell in Olympos
Gave her presents, to make her a fatal bane unto mortals.
When now Zeus had finished this snare so deadly and certain,
Famous Argus slayer, the herald of gods, he commanded,

Leading her thence, as a gift to bestow her upon Epimetheus.
He, then, failed to remember Prometheus had bidden him never
Gifts to accept from Olympian Zeus, but still to return them
Straightway, lest some evil befall thereby unto mortals.
So he received her,—and then, when the evil befell, he remembered.

"Till that time, upon earth were dwelling the races of mortals,
Free and secure from trouble, and free from wearisome labour;
Safe from painful diseases that bring mankind to destruction
(Since full swiftly in misery age unto mortals approacheth).
Now, with her hands, Pandora the great lid raised from the vessel,
Letting them loose: and grievous the evil for men she provided.
Hope yet lingered, alone, in the dwelling securely imprisoned,
Since she under the edge of the lid had tarried, and flew not
Forth: too soon Pandora had fastened the lid of the vessel.
Such was the will of Zeus, cloud-gatherer, lord of the aegis.
Numberless evils beside to the haunts of men had departed,
Full is the earth of ills, and full no less are the waters.
Freely diseases among mankind, by day and in darkness,

Hither and thither may pass, and bring much woe upon mortals:

—Voiceless, since of speech high-counselling Zeus has bereft them" (Ibid., vers. 47–104).

The great fame of the myth will justify such a complete transcription from this its earliest form. Old as the passage is, its fragmentary and discordant details indicate that it is a crude attempt to unite several diverse legends already in circulation. One feature of the myth which has doubtless puzzled us all is, Whence came the strange jar containing all woes for men? Though Homer apparently knows nothing of Pandora, he perhaps supplies an answer to this question. It is in a famous scene of Il. xxiv., where Achilles, himself weary of life, is preaching resignation to his unwelcome guest, the heart-broken Priam. The gods make men's life bitter, though they themselves are secure from trouble, says Achilles;—

"Yea, for indeed two jars in the palace of Zeus are standing,
One of the evil gifts they bestow, and the other of blessings.
He that receives them commingled, from Zeus who delights in the thunder,

Chances at times upon ill, and again at times upon blessings.

He who receives but the troubles, him Zeus makes utterly wretched."

Some have fancied Pandora was allowed to bring this jar of ills (or, perhaps, a vessel filled from it?) as an unwelcome dower.

The mention of Hope, as still imprisoned, is doubtless a peculiarly pessimistic touch. Hope, the deluder, is herself a bane, the poet says—or would be, if existent at all among men. For this, and this alone, Hesiod thanks Mother Pandora,—that she shut the lid before this mischief could flit forth into the world. Modern versions, down to Longfellow's "Pandora" and Hawthorne's "Wonder-book," teach otherwise; indeed, Aeschylos, in his Prometheus, distinctly rejects this view of Hope; but such seems to be Hesiod's thought. Pandora is not without charm, as she stands forth,—

"Garlanded by the fair-tressed Hours with the blossoms of springtime;"

but so many later myth-makers and poets have reshaped and newly adorned her, that the original

Hither and thither may pass, and bring much woe upon mortals:

—Voiceless, since of speech high-counselling Zeus has bereft them" (Ibid., vers. 47–104).

The great fame of the myth will justify such a complete transcription from this its earliest form. Old as the passage is, its fragmentary and discordant details indicate that it is a crude attempt to unite several diverse legends already in circulation. One feature of the myth which has doubtless puzzled us all is, Whence came the strange jar containing all woes for men? Though Homer apparently knows nothing of Pandora, he perhaps supplies an answer to this question. It is in a famous scene of Il. xxiv., where Achilles, himself weary of life, is preaching resignation to his unwelcome guest, the heart-broken Priam. The gods make men's life bitter, though they themselves are secure from trouble, says Achilles;—

"Yea, for indeed two jars in the palace of Zeus are standing,
One of the evil gifts they bestow, and the other of blessings.
He that receives them commingled, from Zeus who delights in the thunder,

Chances at times upon ill, and again at times upon blessings.

He who receives but the troubles, him Zeus makes utterly wretched."

Some have fancied Pandora was allowed to bring this jar of ills (or, perhaps, a vessel filled from it?) as an unwelcome dower.

The mention of Hope, as still imprisoned, is doubtless a peculiarly pessimistic touch. Hope, the deluder, is herself a bane, the poet says—or would be, if existent at all among men. For this, and this alone, Hesiod thanks Mother Pandora,—that she shut the lid before this mischief could flit forth into the world. Modern versions, down to Longfellow's "Pandora" and Hawthorne's "Wonder-book," teach otherwise; indeed, Aeschylos, in his Prometheus, distinctly rejects this view of Hope; but such seems to be Hesiod's thought. Pandora is not without charm, as she stands forth,—

"Garlanded by the fair-tressed Hours with the blossoms of springtime;"

but so many later myth-makers and poets have reshaped and newly adorned her, that the original

Quite un-Homeric is the belief that the folk of this earliest or golden age, after a long life of hale and painless vigour, falling on death as on a pleasant sleep, become *daemones*, (δαίμονες,) wandering over the earth, the kindly guardians of living men. This faith in guardian angels reappears from time to time: strikingly in Plato, and also in Horace (Epist. II. i. 144 and II. ii. 187–189), where every human soul at birth receives such a protector, his genius; but it is especially familiar to us, of course, as a Hebrew and Oriental belief. Such a faith is, doubtless, in varying forms, as extended as the dwellings of humanity. It does not, however, appear to have been a very wide-spread popular belief among the Greeks. Moreover, as early as Empedocles, the philosophers began ascribing to the daemones those superhuman actions which could not be defended as the deeds of virtuous and wise gods. This, in the hands of later Christian assailants, finally gave the word the utterly evil significance still attaching to "demon," "demoniacal," etc.; while "daemon" and "daemonic" would fain revert to the nobler connotation.

In the second, or silvern age, men had the doubtful boon of a childhood one hundred years long, spent at their mother's side, followed by briefer and troublous maturity. This folk was finally swept away altogether by Zeus, for neglect of sacrifice.

"Still, when this race also had under the ground been hidden,
They, underneath our earth, though mortals, are known as the blessèd,
Second, indeed, yet honour to them is also accorded."
(Ibid., vers. 140–142.)

It is quite worth noting, that the nobler golden race still dwell in the goodly sunshine of our world,—a greater boon, to the Greek mind, than any unearthly Elysium, "or casual hope of being elsewhere blest." Without doubt Hesiod would have echoed Achilles' bitter word, uttered in Persephone's realm, which so shocked Plato :—

"Verily I would have chosen to live as the serf of another,
Yea, of a needy man, who had but a scanty subsistence,
Than to be sovran here over all who are dead and departed."
(Odys. xi.)

The third age, of bronze, took its name, partly at least, from the metal used in its utensils and arms.

"Brazen the warlike gear they wore, and brazen their dwellings.
Bronze it was they wrought: not yet black iron existed."
(Works and Days, vers. 150, 151.)

Moreover, this, as also the last and contemporary age, that of iron, corresponds exactly to what is now archaeologically established as to the development of the arts among many races. Hesiod, however, considers it all a story of constant deterioration—with one important exception.

Between the bronze and iron ages he finds place for a fourth, more just and more noble than either. These are the heroes or demigods, and he especially mentions the two great sieges in which most of them perished: about seven-gated Thebes and Priam's citadel. As they were nobler in life than their predecessors, so their after-destiny is brighter. The men of bronze, slain by each other's violent hands, passed down to Hades, leaving the bright sunlight, and—

perhaps worst of all—are *nameless* for evermore. But the later heroes are set by Zeus on the bounds of earth.

"There, by the eddying Ocean, they dwell in the Isles of the Blessed" (Ibid., ver. 171).

Whence arose this belief in the Happy Isles, where thrice a year the bounteous harvest ripens, is not easy to guess. For us they fitly typify the calm, stormless islands of Homeric poesy in which Achilles, Helen, Priam, and the rest abide in eternal majesty. No doubt Hesiod himself was more or less consciously diverted from his current of pessimistic invention by the glorifying genius of the Homeric poets, illuminating the century just before his time. The very inconsistency of the passage with its pessimistic environment seems to stamp Hesiod as a true, if reluctant, Homerid!

These four or five races Hesiod probably regarded as each a separate creation or growth, not as descended one from another. His own folk is apparently doomed to annihilation no less than the others.

"Zeus shall yet destroy this race of humanity also,
When, from the hour of their birth, they appear gray-haired on the temples" (Ibid., vers. 180, 181).

Some have thought this a picturesque way of declaring men would *never* perish from the earth. But youthtime is, to a Greek, the flower of life, and the degeneration from the century-long childhood of the silver age is to be complete, when even the new-born infant shows the marks of exhausted vigour. And there is quite as much truth as poetry deeply imbedded here. Alas for that race which crowds out the careless merriment, the leisurely enjoyment of the passing hour, which should characterize the early years of life!

Hesiod becomes as stern and majestic as a Hebrew prophet, while he tells how perjury and treachery, insolence to parents and to gods, and universal envy shall increase. At last—

"Verily then will depart from the wide-wayed earth to Olympos,—
Wrapping about in robes of white their beautiful figures,
Leaving humankind, to abide with the race of immortals,—
Shame and Vengeance."

By the apologue of the hawk and the nightingale, Hesiod next illustrates the abhorrent doctrine that physical might makes right. The sweet-voiced bird, rather than the familiar dove, was perhaps chosen in allusion to the poet himself in the clutches of the unjust judges. This is the first appearance of the animal-fable in Hellenic literature.

In the eulogy of Justice, which next follows, she is personified as the dear daughter of Zeus, and her seat is close beside his throne. Punishing a whole race, if need be, for its ruler's sin, she bestows prosperity and abundant increase upon righteous nations. So, he adds, they have no need to voyage abroad, since the bounteous earth provides them of its crops! This notion, that foreign travel and trade are impious, occurs in Horace,—not to mention much later men!

The sermon, or admonition, has been heavily loaded with aphorisms and maxims not closely connected with each other. A nobler morality than elsewhere in the poem appears in such lines as :—

"Evil he worketh himself who worketh ill to another."
(Ibid., ver. 265.)

And as sloth is a form of injustice, the poem now stoops from heavenly themes, though still not without grace, to the need of industry, especially for the husbandman.

". . . But remembering still my injunction,
Work, oh Perses, sprung from the gods, that Famine may ever
Hate you, and dear may you be to Demeter, of beautiful garlands,
Awesome one, and still may she fill thy garner with plenty."
(Ibid., vers. 298–301.)

We have now just reached the three hundredth line, and here the poem divides into many ill-connected verses and groups of lines, akin indeed in general scope, as a river is divided to irrigate many fields. The maxims strung together here would be as helpful to Perses as to any other rustic, no doubt.

For a score of lines the word ἔργον, *work*, is repeated with its derivatives and synonyms in most tedious iteration, thus :—

"Work is no disgrace, but the shame is, not to be working;
If you but work, then he who works not will envy you quickly,
Seeing your wealth increase: with wealth come honour and glory" (Ibid., vers. 311–313).

From such general exhortations to justice and industry we pass to more and more practical maxims.

"Summon the man who loves thee to banquet: thy enemy bid not.
Summon him most of all who dwells most closely beside thee.
Since, if aught that is strange or evil chance to befall thee,
Neighbours come ungirt, but kinsmen wait to be girded."
(Ibid., vers. 342–345.)

"—Take your fill when the cask is broached and when it is failing.
Midway spare: at the lees 'tis not worth while to be sparing" (Ibid., vers. 368, 369).

There is much wisdom in the advice to—

"Call, with a smile, for a witness, although 'tis your brother you deal with" (Ibid., ver. 371).

We know what bitter experience had taught him this. Even more gloomy is the remark a few lines later:—

"Let there be one son only, to guard the estate of his father." (Ibid., ver. 376).

At ver. 368 the definite instructions for farmers commence :—

"When the Pleiades, the daughters of Atlas, are rising,
Then begin your harvest: the ploughing when they are setting" (Ibid., vers. 383, 384).

From this point, in a fairly connected fashion, the tasks of the successive seasons are discussed down to ver. 617. The last three or four lines, indeed, are a mere repetition of the advice to plough when the Pleiades set. Whether these closing verses are a late addition or not, the calendar for the circling year is there completed.

These two hundred and thirty-nine lines, then, are the core of the poem, from which it takes its name. Some very general and quaint advice is given :—

"Get thee a dwelling first, and a woman, and ox for the ploughing" (Ibid., ver. 405).

This verse is twice quoted by Aristotle, and as he took the "woman," (γυναῖκα,) for *wife*, it is

thought a mischievous hand, since his day, has interpolated the strange following verse :—

"—Buy thou a woman, not wed her, that she may follow the oxen" (Ibid., ver. 406).

If, as often elsewhere, this last phrase here meant "guide the ploughshare," that is a fitter task for a strong mature man, and is carefully so assigned only thirty lines later :—

"After them there should follow a vigorous ploughman of forty,
When he has eaten a quartern loaf, eight slices, for breakfast" (Ibid., vers. 441, 442).

But there are also very detailed hints, as upon the exact size of timber: three feet long for a mortar, three cubits for a pestle, seven feet for an axletree. The advice to make the share-beam of oak, ploughtail of ilex, poles of bay or elm, may remind us of the carefully selected woods for the Deacon's "One-Hoss Shay :"—

"The hubs of logs from the 'settler's ellum,'—
Last of its timber,—they couldn't sell 'em.
The panels of whitewood, that cuts like cheese,
But lasts like iron for things like these,"

Professor Jebb calls attention to the charm often given to passages in our poem by the mention of birds, they and the stars being the commonest marks of time in the calendar of the rural year.

"Thou must be mindful, too, when the voice of the crane thou hearest
Utter its annual cry from out of the clouds above thee.
She brings signals for ploughing, and heralds the season of winter" (Ibid., vers. 448–450).

Or again :—

"This shall the remedy be, if thou art belated in ploughing.
When in the leaves of the oak is heard the voice of the cuckoo,
First, that across the unbounded earth brings pleasure to mortals,
Three days long let Zeus pour down his rain without ceasing,
So that it fills the oxhoof's print, yet not overflows it.
Then may the ploughman belated be equal with him who was timely" (Ibid., vers. 485–490).

That is, if you do put off your ploughing till spring, choose a wet week for it.

A touch that reminds us how like is human nature in Boeotia or Berkshire, may be rendered :—

"Pass by the seat at the forge, and the well-warmed tavern in winter.
. . . That is the time when a man not slothful increases his substance" (Ibid., vers. 493–495).

The cruel doctrine of early rising has, of course, an honoured place :—

"Shun thou seats in the shade, nor sleep *till the dawn*, in the season
When it is harvest-time, and your skin is parched in the sunshine" (Ibid., vers. 474, 475).

Honest servants seem not to have been the unfailing rule even in these olden days. A hint upon pilfering underlies the advice,—

"Seek thou a homeless thrall, and a serving-maid who is childless" (Ibid., ver. 602).

For the benefit of the tramp, sleeping by day to plunder by night—for there is no new thing under the sun, at least in human nature—Hesiod advises—

"Keep thou a sharp-toothed dog!" *
(Ibid., ver. 604.)

* The mysterious inscription in Rudder Grange illustrates this.

The last and pleasantest task of the circling year is the vintage. The grapes, dried ten days in sun and five in shade, are then to be poured into winepresses—

> "Gifts from the bringer of joy, Dionysos."
> (Ibid., ver. 614.)

As an indication of relative date, we may mention that in Homer Dionysos is not yet joy-giver nor wine-giver, nor of any apparent importance in the daily life of man (cf. pp. 121, 122).

Here, with or without the renewed mention of the Pleiades as the signal for ploughing, and the blessing on the closing year, the poem might well have ended, with a happier note of rustic content than had filled the first section. Instead, the poet turns rather suddenly to the sea:—

> "But if an eager desire for storm-vext voyaging seize thee,"
> (Ibid., vers. 618.)

This subject is discussed in sensible and fairly connected fashion for over seventy lines. There are shrewd touches, like—

> "Praise thou a little vessel: bestow thy freight in a large one" (Ibid., vers. 643).

The only important digression is in the personal reminiscence already mentioned (*supra*, p. 44)—

"I will the ways make known of the waters loudly resounding,
Though I am nowise a master of navigation and vessels,
Since I never have traversed the wide-wayed sea upon ship-board,
Save to Euboea across from Aulis, where the Achaians
Waited of old for winter to pass, and gathered their forces,
Sailing from sacred Hellas to Troy with its beautiful women.
There, to the funeral games of the wise Amphidamas faring,
Over to Chalkis I passed. The abundant prizes they promised
Were by his valorous sons bestowed. As a victor in music
I bore off, I declare, a tripod fitted with handles.
This to the Muses of Helicon there I in gratitude offered
Where they first had made me a master of clear-voiced singing.
So much alone is the knowledge I have of the well-clamped vessels;—
Yet will I utter the thought of Zeus, who is lord of the aegis,
Since the mysterious gift of song I received from the Muses" (Ibid., vers. 648–662).

The passage is probably the germ of the famous

legend, that Hesiod once met and vanquished Homer in a contest of minstrelsy. The verses themselves have been doubted, however, from the days of Alexandrian scholarship until now. They are generally believed to be the utterance—whether truthful or not—of a rhapsode much later than the old poet himself. The voyage to Euboea, here mentioned, is one of *a few rods* only, so the confession of ignorance on the very subject he is treating—navigation—is naïvely complete. But it is said the sea has in all ages, down to Barry Cornwall, been best sung by those who neither loved nor knew it: and Hesiod was under the direct inspiration and guidance of the Heliconian Muses, who could supply any gaps in his experience.

This continuous passage of advice to mariners vanishes in the midst of a sentence—

"Do not stow in the hollowed vessel the whole of thy substance,
Leave thou more behind, and carry the less for a cargo.
Hateful it is to meet with a loss on the watery billows,—
Hateful too if, loading excessive weight on a wagon,

Thou shouldst crush thine axle and so thy burden be wasted.

Keep thou a measure due: all things have a fitting occasion" (Ibid., vers. 689–694).

The next seventy lines are a mere string of maxims, religious, ethical, ceremonial, and diverse in character. Many of them open up curious problems of folklore and superstition. Before crossing a river, to stand gazing on its current and to utter a prayer is but a recognition of the river-god's dangerous power. But why wash the hands also? Is it an emblem of one's innocence? "Don't pare your finger-nails at a religious banquet" has its modern parallel. "Don't tell lies for the sake of talking," is a positive insult. Some yet cruder and more elemental "Don'ts" must be passed over in emphatic silence.

Finally, the last sixty lines of the poem are a calendar of the lucky and unlucky days in each month, and so may be responsible for the latter half of the title. These precepts are, no doubt, largely pure superstition. The fourth of the month is the day to marry, and Proclos has

explained that this is the day sacred to Aphrodite and Hermes the guide. Why the twentieth and tenth are fortunate days to beget a boy, and the fourteenth a girl, is not explained. The *thirteenth* is unlucky for sowing, but proper for setting out plants—a finer distinction than our own silly fears would make. Indeed the poet himself rebels — timidly — against such beliefs, as he makes clear in the closing strain, which is not without a quiet dignity of its own:—

"Different men praise different days: they are rare who do know them.
Often a day may prove as a stepmother, often a mother:
Blessèd and happy is he who, aware of all that concerns them,
Wisely works his task, unblamed in the sight of immortals,
Judging the omens aright, and succeeds in avoiding transgression" (Ibid., vers. 824–828).

Altogether, this poem is one which grows in interest with more careful and thoughtful perusal. The unfavourable comparison with Homer's sparkling narratives fades from our thought. Interest of a different kind is gradually awakened. We seem, indeed, to be learning to breathe the heavier

and more restful Boeotian air. The general relation of parts can often be felt, even where we could hardly demonstrate an adequate logical or artistic connection. At last we may find we are acquiring a certain faith in, and a strong regard for, the quaint sturdy old Ascraean farmer and bard. At the least, he becomes a very real and very human being.

NOTE.—There is a fair version of both Hesiod's chief poems by Elton (Bohn's Classical Library), the Works in rhymed pentameters, the Theogony in blank verse. In the same volume of "Bohn" is a better prose version, with many useful notes. The annotated edition of the Greek text by the versatile F. A. Paley is one of his least satisfactory works; but it is the only available Hesiod with English notes. Far more learned is the Latin commentary of Göttling. A brief but masterly (literary) critique of Hesiod's poems is included in Professor Jebb's beautiful volume, "Classical Greek Poetry." Symonds has also a genial account.

III.

THE HESIODIC THEOGONY, SHIELD OF HERACLES, ETC.

We have had occasion to mention before a famous passage in Herodotos (ii. 53), in which he declares that it was Hesiod and Homer who settled the names, the powers, the honours, and even made known the forms, of the Greek gods. Of course this does not mean that these poets used with perfect freedom their own inventive powers, but, chiefly, that the traditions and myths accepted by them gained such currency as to overpower discordant and contradictory stories. This is largely true; though it must always be kept in mind that local, tribal, or national beliefs and rites, quite irreconcilable with one another—or with any literary tradition—lived on everywhere, and may at any point still come to our knowledge

through a religious monument, an inscription, or even a late piece of pottery, preserving in its decorative pictures some else-forgotten local legend. But above all this tangled thicket of contradictory polytheism and petty myth the conceptions of Homer and Hesiod do rise into something like national acceptance among the Greeks, and exercise a dominant—though not an exclusive—influence on later lyric and dramatic poets, on sculptor and painter, even, in some degree, on the tenacious local beliefs and cults themselves.

When Herodotos speaks thus of Homer, he probably thinks chiefly, but not solely, of Iliad and Odyssey. We have seen (*supra*, pp. 14, 15) that he promptly rejected the Homeric authorship of the famous and magnificent Cyprian Epic, because it disagreed with the Iliad as to the course of Paris' voyages. In regard to one, at least, of the early Theban epics, Herodotos is doubtful if it was Homeric or no. Whether he would have credited the Cyclic *Theogony* to Homer we cannot say. Probably not, for he shows more shrewdness in literary judgments

than in almost anything else. At any rate, this Cyclic Theogony has utterly perished, and we can test Herodotos' statement only by the two Homeric poems proper.

Homer's gods are, on the whole, distinctly more ignoble than any of his men and women. While conceived in our human likeness, and even more subjected than we to the bodily instincts and passions, they are necessarily deprived of man's noblest attributes. They cannot risk their lives in a noble cause, for instance, since they are immortal. Xenophanes, an early philosopher, said, with savage justice, that Homer (and Hesiod too) made the gods do all the things held most shameful among men; and thereupon follows a bold enumeration of the chief crimes in the decalogue (*infra*, p. 181).

It is, perhaps, fortunate also, for our impressions as to the Homeric ideals of divinity, that the gods appear in the poems only incidentally; in the Iliad, in fact, only so far as they take an active interest in the fate of Troy. This doom of the city is, moreover, a signal example of essential justice, since treachery to the hospitality,

and sin against the nuptial rights of Menelaos, bring just ruin on Paris and all his race. To be sure, Helen returns to prosperity, and is apparently assured of deathless bliss, while many innocent and noble sufferers are involved in the general calamity. But for the deepest problems of human suffering and sin, we have, perhaps, no right to demand a solution from the earliest of poets. Perhaps, again, the Helen of the Odyssey is hardly human at all.

Homer finds Zeus, so to speak, in full possession of his Olympian throne, and in fairly good control, too, of his obstreperous family. The poet had little occasion to refer to the earlier ages of elemental strife, to the legends of fatherly cannibalism and filial violence which have puzzled and shocked a hundred generations. In part, at least, Homer must have known and accepted these tales also. He knows that the Titans, the conquered uncles of imperial Zeus, sit in eternal confinement within lowest Tartarus. This was, of course, a penalty of defeat, an evidence of divine strife. Though Zeus in Homer boasts himself more than a match for all his family,

yet the gentle Thetis reminds him how he had once been overpowered and cast into chains by his wife and children, and rescued only when she herself brought up to his aid the hundred-handed Briareos.

The still cruder tale of Uranos' mutilation at his children's hands, and on the instigation of his own wife, Ge, the weary Earth-mother, may have been unknown, or, again, may have been deliberately rejected, by Homer. He distinctly speaks, not of Uranos, but of Okeanos as first father of all. Here the sea-loving Ionian race may really have held firmly a creed more to their taste than the belief which afterward became the only orthodox one. For similar reasons, Poseidon the Earthshaker, who holds the world in his embrace, was long the supreme divinity of many an Ionian state. Indeed the late and reluctant compromise, which makes the sea-god a less mighty brother of Zeus', leaves him still unquestioned power in his own demesne: and he rarely takes a place at the stormy Olympian council-board at all. In early myth he is often seen unwillingly retiring before the Olympian

gods proper, and his expulsion by Pallas Athene from the Athenian Acropolis, by Apollo from Delphi, was marked by open strife which was never entirely forgotten. But the assertion here to be emphasized is, that if Homer had worked out for us his full conception of Olympian ancient history and family life, it would, perhaps, shock us at least as much as does the Theogony of Hesiod.

This poem, of ten hundred and twenty-two hexameter verses, is the earliest Greek sketch of "systematic theology" we are likely ever to behold. It may well be, indeed, the first adequate attempt the Greeks had ever made to record and to reconcile the fancies, long current among them, as to the origin of the world and its divine government.

The prevailing opinion of antiquity assigned this poem also to the author of the Works and Days. (Pausanias the traveller, alone, asserts that the folk dwelling in his day about Mount Helicon accepted only the Works and Days as Hesiod's genuine work.) The general voice was probably, essentially, in the right. Some

discrepancies and repetitions in the two works may be ascribed to the annoying interpolation from which both have certainly suffered. But at least, the two chief Hesiodic poems should be accredited to the same age, and to the same provincial, didactic, rather feebly inspired offshoot of the great Homeric school. The influence of Homer is seen everywhere, in the fragments of lost works as in the extant Hesiodic poems. In particular, the marked local dialect of Boeotia, a coarse form of Aeolic Greek, has hardly coloured at all the traditional Ionic language of the epic school. Many lines and half lines are borrowed without change from Iliad or Odyssey. Occasionally, even, an Ionic name or usage, which must have been unintelligible in Boeotia, betrays the intrusive interpolation of a later time. But the Theogony is still, essentially, Hesiodic.

We turn to a continuous analysis of its contents, a somewhat less difficult, but also less interesting task, than in the case of the Works and Days. The first one hundred and sixteen lines are an invocation of the Muses, daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne, or Memory. Here their

names occur, for the first time in Greek literature. No attributes are assigned to any, though it is said of Calliope, who was undoubtedly regarded already as the patroness of epic poetry,—

"She of them all is the oldest.
She, moreover, abides in the courts of reverend monarchs."
(Theog., vers. 79, 80.)

It should be remembered that the bards everywhere in Homer appear as courtly minstrels. There is, indeed, a passage here almost as proud as that haughty close of Pindar's first Olympic ode, setting, like it, king and singer on almost equal pedestals. Of the ruler, Hesiod says—

"He is supreme among his people assembled,
Even as is among men the sacred gift of the Muses.
Since from the Muses spring, and the mighty archer Apollo,
Those whoso upon earth are the singers of songs, and the harpers.
Monarchs arise from Zeus. Yet blessèd is he whom the Muses
Cherish: and sweet is the liquid speech from his lips that is flowing.
Ay, though it may be a man with fresh-wrought trouble of spirit,

Bitterly vexed at heart, is pining, yet if a minstrel,
Liegeman of Muses, sing of the heroes' glories aforetime,
Or of the blessèd gods who have their abode in Olympos,
—Soon he forgets his sorrow: his cares no more are remembered" (Theog., vers. 92–102).

This is certainly a noble and a lofty strain, and is all too closely imitated in one of the Homeric Hymns (*infra*, p. 111). Fused into the same prologue however, indeed preceding this appeal to the Olympian sisters nine, is a much humbler invocation of the *Heliconian* Muses :—

"They who Hesiod once in glorious music instructed
While he was watching his lambs in the dales of Helicon sacred.
This is the earliest word unto me by the goddesses uttered."

(And a very strange word it is, this first greeting of the Muses to our race!)

"'Shepherds that dwell in the fields, ye gluttons ignoble and wretched,
Many a fiction like to the truth are we skilful to utter,
Yet are we skilled no less to reveal, if we will, what is truthful!'
Then as a staff they gave me a branch of luxuriant laurel,

Plucking it, fair to behold: with the power of song they inspired me,
So I in verse could ennoble the things of the past and the future" (Ibid., vers. 22–32).

In truth, this long "prologue" contains certainly two, and probably half a dozen, hymns, or preludes, each addressed to the Muses. The announcement of the proper subject does not even begin until ver. 105:—

"Sing ye the sacred race of immortals ever-existing,
Those who arose into life from the Earth and star-studded Heaven,
Out of the murky Night, or else by the salt Deep nurtured" (Ibid., vers. 105–107).

These are alike forces and persons: for personification was not then, as with us, a device of rhetoric, it was the resistless instinct of childish man.

"Tell how, aforetime, gods and Earth came into existence,
Rivers, and Deep unbounded, for ever surging and swelling,
Stars that brightly gleam, and Heaven extended above us;
Then of the gods who from them sprang, the Bestowers of blessings;
Tell us how they divided their wealth, and parted the honours,

How they came to abide on Olympos abounding in ridges.
These things sing me, Muses who hold your Olympian dwellings
From the beginning:—and say what first came into existence" (Ibid., vers. 108–116.)

First of all, we learn, was only *Chaos*, i.e. Yawning (space), but Earth arises. With her appear Tartaros, *i.e.* the nether gloom, the mere antithesis of kindly mother Earth, and Eros, Desire or Love,

"Lord and subduer of all, who is fairest among the Immortals."

Such assertions about Eros are repeated constantly by later Greeks. Whether Hesiod had any clear, or vague, insight into the cosmic law of attraction we call gravitation, or the mystic tie of sexual instinct on which all organic life must depend, we may hardly dare to decide. That Eros was the *eldest* of things created, we find stated first by Parmenides (*infra*, p. 187).

Earth produces out of herself overarching Heaven to be her wedded mate. The mountains and the woodland nymphs are her children

too. So are deep-eddying Okeanos, Hyperion, and the other vaguely conceived brethren, the Titans, who afterwards strive in vain against that mightier third generation whom Zeus leads to victory. Kronos is the youngest and fiercest of this Titan brood. He takes the lead in that revolting mutilation of his father Uranos, which his mother Earth, weary of child-bearing, plans and assists. Some dim figurative meaning this legend once had, no doubt. Perhaps Kronos is primeval man, resisting the tyranny of the wild forces of the early world, typified in the father Uranos.

Earth is not mother of all things. Like, if not equal, to her, Night is sprung from Chaos, and is also mother of a countless brood. Without a wedded mate she bore Doom and Death, Dreams, Nemesis, Age, and Strife,—and also the three Fates, who are here first named: Clotho the spinner, Lachesis, and Atropos. But strangely enough a much later passage names the same trio again, as daughters, not of Night at all, but of Zeus and Themis. The commentators are inclined to cut out the earlier passage. But,

indeed, the later philosophers, and poets also, were not quite agreed whether these rulers of destiny were themselves subject to Zeus, or older and mightier than he. Perhaps by their twofold place in the Theogony itself they typify a question which even the Christian theologian may discuss: Is a supreme but just ruling divinity himself subject to, or superior to, law and destiny?

Night, wedded to her brother Erebos, produced also Day, and Ether, the light upper air. The Cyclic Titanomachy, we are told, made Ether the father of Uranos. Each cosmogony necessarily varied freely in such matters. But we soon weary in the attempt to extract mystic or other significance from these faint personifications and tiresome allegories. Yet even from the mere lists of names, that sometimes reach portentous length, unexpected information may be gleaned. Thus at ver. 237—

> "Tethys unto Okeanos bare the eddying rivers."

The list of twenty-five streams which follows can only be a selection even from the limited

geographical area known to the poet. (He says, indeed, that he could name three thousand.) Yet the very first is Neilos, which Homer knew only as "the river Aegyptos,"—so we are clearly in a later age. Next is Alpheios, and then Eridanos, probably the Po. The mention of Ister, or the Danube, shows that Greek mariners had already faced the terrors of the Black Sea. The failure of Rhone or Rhine to appear in the catalogue may perhaps indicate the Western limits of Hellenic knowledge in Hesiod's day. Simois and Scamander, the two Trojan rivers, are mentioned far apart in the list, but the epithet *divine*, applied to both, and only to them, is probably a tribute to the master's masterpiece. The name of Scamander has also a certain prominence as the closing word in the passage. A more elaborate tribute to the Poeta Sovrano was noted in the Works and Days (*supra*, pp. 60–61).

The musical harmony, even in a bare list of Greek names, may be felt in vers. 243–262, where the fifty sea-nymphs, daughters of Nereus, are all catalogued. Only a few, Amphitrite,

Achilles' mother Thetis, and Galatea who lured the Cyclops on to make himself ridiculous, are familiar. Yet all float, as gracefully as the curving billows themselves, upon the bounding dactyls of Hesiod's verse:—

"Glaukonomè, who in laughter delights, and Pontoporeia,
Leiagorè and Euagorè and Laomedeia.
Ponlynomè and Autonoè and Lysianassa!"

Even Hesiod shrinks from enumerating the three thousand ocean-nymphs, and we, avoiding the strange monsters, Cerberos and Hydra, Sphinx and Chimaera dire, may pass on rapidly to ver. 453, the beginning of a new but still savage age. Kronos, the unnatural son, is a yet more cruel father. His children by Rheia are devoured whole as fast as they are born: Hestia, Demeter, and Herè, Hades, and Poseidon. The sixth child is Zeus, but in his stead a great stone, wrapt in swaddling-clothes, sated the ostrich-like paternal voracity. Safely arrived at maturity, Zeus rescues his brothers and sisters from this living tomb. Moreover, his own changeling, the stone, was itself deposited by

Zeus on earth, at Delphi, to be a memorial to mortals. Few families would set such a memorial stone on consecrated ground! Doubtless the poet Hesiod himself had seen it there, as Pausanias did many centuries later. But Xenophanes and Plato, Aeschylos and Pindar, raise a fearless cry of disbelief in all such horrors as this tale.

Less famous than Kronos is his brother-Titan Iapetos, who, wedding the ocean-nymph Clymene, begets four sons, the most familiar of whom are Atlas and Prometheus. Atlas, at Zeus' bidding, holds the sky upon his shoulders. It is, doubtless, his share in the punishment meted out to the vanquished Titans. Prometheus' story is more fully told. Why this cousin of Zeus is the champion of man is, however, not explained. Indeed, of man's creation we hear nothing at all. Neither do we learn how the human race had existed without women previous to Pandora's appearance. The tale begins abruptly (ver. 535).

"When now gods were at strife with mortal men at Mekonè"

Were the two races equals or companions until then? What was this strange gathering at Mekonè (Sicyon)? Even the verb (ἐκρίνοντο) is of doubtful meaning, and may signify "were deciding their dispute." At any rate, an ox is there slain, and Prometheus slily wraps the worthless bones in tempting white fat, but, on the other hand, conceals the good meat within the hide,—and offers Zeus his choice. Zeus is not deceived—so he assures us—but takes the less valuable portion knowingly, is wroth at Prometheus none the less, and in his rage refuses the gift of fire to wretched men. That they had possessed it before is not expressly said. In fact, we get no glimpse at our race's origin or previous condition. Prometheus steals the fire, and brings it to men in a hollow reed. It is later poets who explain, that he obtains it from Zeus' hearth-fire, or Hephaistos' forge, or by lighting a torch at the sun-god's chariot wheels. Singularly enough the custom among men of sacrificing to the gods, as their share, the bones of the victims wrapped in fat, and eating the rest themselves, became a permanent usage. Indeed,

the whole tale appears to be "teleological," *i.e.* invented as an explanation for the actual Greek habit in sacrifice, though it can hardly be accepted as either a pious or a reassuring solution!

Pandora is now created by Zeus in his wrath, to punish men further for Prometheus' daring. But men and gods are apparently still dwelling together on nearly equal terms. Probably men were thought of by Hesiod as actually the children of Prometheus, or as creatures that had been fashioned out of clay and endowed with life by him. (Both theories are found in later writers.) Possibly the passage in which this was explained has accidentally dropped out of our Theogony.

It is Epimetheus (Afterthought, or the Short-sighted One,) just as in the Works and Days, who receives and weds Pandora, and as we hear that "from her came the race of mortal women," he at least, if not Prometheus, is to be regarded as our divine ancestor. Hesiod, by the way, takes a far more pessimistic view of the woman question in the Theogony than in the Works. Prometheus is bound to a column, of Zeus' hall perhaps—or, more

probably, in Tartaros.* Prometheus' liver grows miraculously every night to sate the rapacious eagle that feeds on it by day. It is Heracles who later slays the eagle, not without the approval of Zeus, who is glad to glorify his illustrious mortal son. That Zeus was prompted by any fear of Prometheus' power, or made any compromise with him, is nowhere intimated by Hesiod. In Aeschylos' great theological tragedy of Prometheus, the hero is made the son of Themis (Justice), and shares with her the knowledge of a mysterious danger threatening Zeus' throne. This gives to the sufferer the power of resistance which is almost essential to a tragic hero.

This Promethean story is for many reasons the most interesting feature of the Theogony. It is a pity that it appears there in a confused and probably in a fragmentary form. These first gropings of man's awakened intellect about those roots of primeval mystery which no human

* This column, instead of the Aeschylean rock, is seen in early pictures of the group. See, for instance, the curious black-figured vase on which Atlas and Prometheus appear together: Baumeister, p. 1411.

ingenuity can lay bare, must have a strange fascination for every thoughtful mind. We surely all share the gentle poet's faith—

> "That in even savage bosoms
> There are longings, yearnings, strivings,
> For the good they comprehend not;
> That the feeble hands and helpless,
> Groping blindly in the darkness,
> Touch God's right hand in that darkness,
> And are lifted up and strengthened."

The great fault of our classical dictionaries and manuals of mythology is that they piece the new cloth of Lucian and Apollodorus, ay even mediæval and modern fancy, upon the tattered and faded myths of prehistoric Greece, and give us no clue to trace by themselves the crude beginnings, upon which so many generations as well as great individual poets or philosophers have made additions and alterations. Aeschylos' or Plato's Prometheus—yes, Shelley's or Lowell's—can give us much of noble suggestion; but they do not fill out faithfully the Hesiodic sketch.

The remainder of the poem must be passed over rapidly. The most vigorous sustained passage

is the war between the Titans, Zeus' uncles, on the one side, and the younger god himself with his brothers and allies on the other. Like the Trojan war on earth, this struggle lasts ten years. Tantalizing to the last, Hesiod gives us no real explanation of its origin or cause: but it is no doubt again a shadow cast upon the clouds, as it were, by man's real conflict with Nature's savage forces.

The prison-house of the vanquished Titans, as far beneath the earth as Heaven is high above, is described with a lurid splendour and vagueness in outline rather reminding us of the Miltonic imagination than of Dante's clear-cut precision. In the same general connection occurs the fine passage upon Styx. This eldest of Okeanos' daughters has rendered efficient aid to Zeus in the great war. In fact, her two sons, Kratos and Bia, Strength and Force, are indispensable supporters of the new throne, and in the opening scene of Aeschylos' play we may see how they compel the reluctant smith-god Hephaistos to spike the no less reluctant Prometheus to a crag beside the lonely Northern sea. Styx is a

divinity and a mother, then, but she is at the same time a mighty river in that dark nether world, fed by a tenth part of Okeanos' own stream. For her support in danger she is rewarded by a signal honour. Zeus selects her waters as the especial safeguard against deception among the gods. She herself, indeed, never leaves her station below, by the palace of Hades and Persephone.

"There is the goddess' abode who is hated among the immortals,
Awesome Styx. She is first-born daughter to refluent Ocean.
There, far off from the gods, is set her illustrious dwelling,
Covered above by enormous rocks: and about it on all sides,
Firmly joined to the sky, it stands, by pillars of silver.
Seldom thither does swift-footed Iris, the daughter of Wonder,
Fare with the message she bringeth across the sea's wide ridges;
Only so often as strife hath arisen among the immortals.
Whoso speaks untruth, of them that abide in Olympos,
Iris is sent by Zeus, from afar, in her golden pitcher,
That great oath of the gods to fetch: the water so famous.
Coldly it trickleth down from a rock, both craggy and lofty.
Whoso, among the immortals who dwell upon snowy Olympos'
Summits, perjures himself as he pours thereof a libation,

Breathless is destined to lie, until a year is completed.
Never to him ambrosia, the food of immortals, is proffered,
Never the nectar; but still without breathing he tarries, and speechless,
There on his couch outstretched; and evil the slumber that wraps him.
When this penalty now with the long year comes to completion,
Still thereafter another more grievous evil awaits him.
Nine years long is he parted from gods whose life is unending,
Never with them may he join in council, never at banquet,
Nine full years. In the tenth he again may mingle among them,
Joining in speech with immortals who hold the Olympian dwellings.
—Such is the oath gods swear by the deathless Stygian waters."

This is, perhaps, as favourable an example as could be selected to illustrate Hesiod's loftier style. While Zeus exacts this solemn pledge and penalty in cases of divine perjury, there is in Hesiod no explicit statement that oaths or promises given by the gods under other circumstances may be lightly broken. Nevertheless, this Hesiodic myth easily opened the way for

such an interpretation, and it was only too widely accepted in later days.

Whether Joseph Rodman Drake was a classical student or not, this passage must have influenced directly or remotely some of the most delicate fancies in the "Culprit Fay." So near do even the latest creations of poetic art come to the Hellenic sources of original inspiration.

It would have been better for the poem as a work of art if it had broken off here. But the rewards to Zeus' supporters take chiefly the form of brides—he himself securing the leonine share, —and the later verses return to the wearisome genealogical lists, from which we supposed we had escaped. Last-mentioned of creatures wholly divine is the sorceress Medea. There is perhaps a gap, possibly even a new work begins here, for the Muses are invoked anew, and we now learn of the goddesses who have borne children to mortal fathers (ver. 963). Finally, our manuscript text ends (vers. 1021–1022) with the mere prologue for still another catalogue now lost:— bidding the Muses "Sing of the race of women!" Those mortal women who had borne children to

divine fathers are undoubtedly meant. Indeed of this poem, as of others from the great Hesiodic school, many tantalizing fragments yet remain.

The great poetic fault in the Theogony is its feeble perspective and extreme lack of proportion. We have mentioned, for instance, the passage (vers. 349–361) in which fifty nymphs are swiftly catalogued by name. To pass from this to the large vague outlines of Titanic strife is like changing suddenly a microscope for a telescope. Even in the very midst of such a rapid list, we are detained, at the mention of Hecatè, while a hymn of forty lines is devoted to her alone! This may well be an interpolation, but it shares fully the interest of the rest. Indeed the value of the Theogony is not chiefly as a single work of art, nor even as literature at all. Crude, contradictory, perhaps the creation of various hands and generations, it is worthy of study as an early attempt to project our human intellect into that dark backward and abysmal mystery which still excites and baffles alike the imagination of the savage, the child, and the

philosopher. The special student of Greek literature is struck, furthermore, with the influence exerted by the Hesiodic myths throughout the Prometheus of Aeschylos. Indeed that great trilogy may well have been planned in great part as a protest against the crude and ignoble theology of Hesiod. To this theme we may hope to return.

We have just noticed the strange fashion in which our manuscripts of the Hesiodic Theogony close. The last four lines are unmistakably a summing-up of the previous fifty verses, and an opening invocation for a new poem—or for a new section in a great theological corpus of poetry:—

"These are the goddesses who, with mortal husbands united,
Bore them children, like unto gods whose life is eternal.
—Now of the race of mortal women sing me, ye sweet-voiced
Muses Olympian, daughters to Zeus who is lord of the aegis" (Theog., vers. 1019–1022).

The form of these two contrasted couplets makes

the latter allusion plainly point to women who have borne children by the gods. This catalogue would, naturally, be much longer than the list of the children from goddesses by mortal mates, which had just been given. Many fragments and allusions attest the existence, and the popularity, in classical times of this Hesiodic Catalogue of Women. Indeed, learned editors like Göttling and Kinkel swell the list of these citations to more than a hundred and twenty: (though how such incidents as the union of two mortals, Telemachos and Nestor's daughter, or of the divine Thetis with human Peleus, etc., can be properly included there, I am unable to see). The truth is, that the mention of an ancestress in this list became, for many ancient families, the chief evidence of illustrious origin. This may well remind us of the royal "bar sinister," prominent in so many modern coats-of-arms.

It chances that one notable episode from the Catalogue has been preserved in full. It is the tale of Zeus' amour with Alcmene, and of Heracles' birth. The fifty-six verses were found

in the fourth book of the Catalogue, as a Greek commentator positively states. The manner in which the passage is transmitted to us, however, is curious and instructive. It is now read as the opening section of a poem called the "Shield of Heracles," in 480 hexameters. To the tale of Alcmene a later rhapsode has attached, very awkwardly, an account of one among Heracles' less famous adventures, viz. the fight with Cycnus. This story is really told in 245 lines (vers. 57–140 and 320–480). But into this, again, has been thrust a description of Heracles' shield—of course an imitation of the famous passage in the Iliad on the armour of Achilles. This rather wearisome digression fills vers. 141 to 320, or much more than a third of the poem, to which it therefore, properly enough, has given its accepted name. The sutures here indicated are perfectly evident, even if we had not the positive ancient witness, who apparently still read the opening lines also in their proper place, in the Catalogue of Women. If these added portions are fair samples, then the later rhapsodes of the Hesiodic school were feeble in conception and

tasteless in execution, even as compared with their own master.

Some lesser fragments from the Catalogue, *e.g.* a description of Dodona and its oracle, in ten hexameters, may be read with pleasure.

Various other titles of poems, and scanty fragments, attributed to Hesiod, still remain. A curious problem is raised by the "Eoeae," which is variously cited as identical with the Catalogue of Women, as a part of it, and as a separate poem, often in disagreement with the Catalogue! The truth may be, that, originally poems of the same general school, but by different hands, they were united by later editors, just as the discordant Cyclic Epics were forced into a sort of harmony. The curious title is easily explained. Beginning, perhaps, with some such formula as Nestor's—

"Never have I such heroes seen, nor shall I behold them,"

each new section opened "*or such as*" (ἢ οἵη). Several such lines still remain, among the scanty fragments quoted from either poem. In

particular, the "Shield of Heracles" ("from the fourth book of the Catalogue") begins—

"*Or as*, deserting her home and the land of her father,
Alcmene . . ."

Among the titles of lost Hesiodic works, the "Epithalamium on Peleus and Thetis," and "Theseus' Descent to Hades," are as attractive as any mythological subjects; and the former might have proved, if preserved, a welcome literary pendant for the François vase, and, perhaps, largely the source of Catullus' ideas in his largest poem. Purely didactic treatises, like one on "Astronomy," are mentioned. The "Precepts of Chiron" (the Centaur who instructed Achilles) may have been both mythic and didactic. But this, like the "Prophetic Verses," and the "Journey about the World," may well have been mere later compilations of extracts from the voluminous Hesiodic works.

Even in the sustained poems yet extant, the Works and Days, the Theogony, and the Shield of Heracles, we can hardly feel sure at any point that we have the material just as it left Hesiod's hands. The stamp set upon it is, at best, that

of a school—perhaps merely the mark of any early age and of a rather rustic and crude artistic sense. Despite the inspiring Homeric examples, literature seems to be in its infancy again. Perhaps it is, rather, in the opening years of maturity, struggling vainly with philosophic thought and with a fuller personal consciousness, to which the happier singers of the morning gave little heed.

IV.

THE HOMERIC HYMNS.

When Odysseus was being entertained by Nausicaa's parents (Odys. viii. 499), he asked the court minstrel Demodocos to sing the tale of the wooden horse; and the bard straightway—

"Impelled of the god began."

The Greek scholiast is in doubt whether this means "He, inspired by the god, began," or "Taking his start from the god he began." For it was their custom, he adds, to offer a prelude in the god's honour. So it is possible Homer himself contains an allusion to this custom of the poets and rhapsodes, to open their epic recital with a prelude, invoking the divinity at whose festival or shrine they were present, or under whose especial guardianship they stood.

Pindar (circa 500 B.C.), also, commences his second Pythian ode thus:—

> "As the Homeridae,
> Minstrels of well-joined verse,
> Begin most often with a prelude unto Zeus."

A clearer hint is given by Plutarch, in § 6 of his treatise on Music: "For first paying their devoirs to the gods, they (the rhapsodes or professional reciters) passed on quickly to the poesy of Homer and the others."

While this might well happen even at the courts of the Achaian princes in the heroic age, it seems more appropriate to the popular religious festivals, the gathering of whole nations at their common shrines, in the later more democratic days. This impression is confirmed by the passage in the great Apollo-hymn (*infra*, p. 134), describing the gathering of the Ionians on Delos. And these very verses, which are quoted by Thucydides (iii. 104, 3) unquestioningly as Homeric, probably are, as a matter of fact, among the oldest, if not the very oldest, in our collection. Yet even they are evidently much later than the royal Achaian days.

It is noticeable that Thucydides there calls the poem, not a hymn, but a prelude (*prooimion*). Preludes, then, for the most part, these *Hymni Homerici* are; all later than the great epics, and probably extending through several centuries, at least to the close of the Attic period. In length they vary from three lines to nearly six hundred. They borrow verses and passages very freely from each other. In particular, number twelve, only three lines long, is a tribute to Persephone's mother. The opening verse—

"First Demeter I sing, the fair-tressed reverend goddess,"

is identical with the first hexameter in the great Eleusinian hymn (number four). The second line—

"Her and her daughter as well, most beautiful Persephoneia,"

is, again, seemingly borrowed from ver. 493 of the larger poem, with a mere change of case. The closing strain—

"Hail, O goddess, protect this town. And begin our singing,"

is no great *tour de force:* and when we find this

too, verbatim, in another hymn to Demeter—composed by the learned Alexandrian poet, Callimachos—we begin to question whether our modest triplet had any separate inspiration at all! Though an extreme, this is no isolated case. And while the hymns borrow so freely of each other, nearly all are more or less dependent on the Homeric epic. One of the liveliest, in particular, the hymn to Aphrodite which describes her love for Anchises, is largely a mere *cento*, or patchwork, line after line being borrowed, little or not at all changed, from Homer, but also in some cases from Hesiod, the great Demeter-hymn, and others.

Leaving, however, one or two of the "great" hymns for separate discussion, we will pass in review, in the present chapter, some typical examples of the briefer hymns, or preludes proper. Though Pindar speaks of such preludes as addressed oftenest to Zeus, only one, of the briefest and weakest, in our collection, is directed to him by name. It has but four verses, and may be thus rendered—with some dilution:—

"Zeus will I sing of, among all gods most mighty and
greatest,
Wide-eyed, ruling the world, whose wishes afar are accom-
plished,
Who, as he sits with Themis, engages in chat confidential.
Be propitious, oh wide-eyed Zeus, most famous and
mighty!"

As a fairer type of the lesser hymns we may render entire the twenty-fourth, which consists of seven lines. Incidentally, the close kinship with the prelude of Hesiod's Theogony (*supra*, p. 83) may be noted. One poet or the other has borrowed quite too freely.

"I with the Muses first will begin, and Zeus, and Apollo,
Since those men from the Muses come, and Apollo the
Archer,
Whoso upon our earth are the singers of songs, and the
harpers.
Kings are come from Zeus. Yet blest is he whom the
Muses
Love, and sweet is the liquid speech from his lip that is
flowing.
Greeting, children of Zeus! and grant to my minstrelsy
honour;
I of you, and, as well, of another song, will be mindful."

Such a closing line, with its plain transition to

the epic recitation that followed, is frequently, but not invariably, found in these hymns. Indeed the question has been raised whether some may not be rather *post*-ludes, since the gods especially concerned were doubtless often invoked at the end no less than at the beginning, as our number twenty remarks:—

"Phoebos, the swan of thee sings sweetly under his feathers,
Leaping up to the bank at the side of the eddying river,
By the Peneios. The minstrel, holding the clear-toned phorminx,
Sweet-voiced sings of thee at the end and beginning. Oh ruler,
Be thou therefore gracious, for thee do I honour in singing."

Once, at least, in a brief hymn (No. 5) to Aphrodite, the rhapsode closes with a distinct mention of a contest (ἀγών) about to occur, praying for victory therein.

It is not often easy to detect any especial fitness, in these rather formal invocations, to any particular section of the great epics, which the minstrel may have recited immediately thereafter. Possibly the singer, when about to repeat, for instance, the glorious Sixth Iliad,—including

the scene where the matrons of the city, so justly doomed, march in vain to Pallas's temple with their suppliant gifts,—may have chosen, or even composed, the brief but earnest prelude numbered XI. in our collection:—

"Pallas Athene first will I sing, the preserver of cities,
Terrible, who to the works of war is with Ares devoted—
Cities falling in ruin, the shouting, and tumult of battle.
She, too, saveth the host, when issuing forth or returning.
Greeting, oh goddess, to thee! Prosperity grant me, and fortune."

But, as a rule, we can only surmise that the god of the festival day, or the god in whose sacred close the minstrel stood, was thus propitiated before the epic recital itself was entered upon.

The larger poems of the collection are no longer mere invocations. They contain entire myths, usually adventures of the gods they honour. Some critics indeed would assign certain poems in the group to comparatively secular rather than religious occasions—if such a distinction can be made at all in Hellenic life. Thus the amour of Aphrodite and Anchises

certainly does the goddess little honour, and it has been suggested that the poem upon her was perhaps rather a courtly compliment to some prince, in the Troad or elsewhere, claiming descent from that illustrious pair. It would, in fact, be easy to drop the last two of its two hundred and ninety-four verses, wherein the singer greets the goddess, and announces that he passes from her to "another hymn." (The word *hymnos*, however, used here and often, probably had at first no especial religious connection. It seems to be derived from the verb which signifies "to weave," and may have meant a "woven song," or composition, in any key. Later it was chiefly restricted to the Apollo-cult.)

These poems are, it is thought, not only centuries apart in age, but equally diverse in local origin, each arising, as a rule, not far from the chief shrine of the god it celebrates. Yet the differences generally elude any save microscopic analysis.

Thus scholars disagree whether the delightful hymn to Pan (No. 18) betrays its Athenian origin by peculiarities of diction. If Attic, it is

probably late, as Herodotos makes Pan, when aiding the Athenians against Xerxes, complain that they never theretofore worshipped or honoured him. (Lovers of Browning, or of Herodotos, will recall the tale of Pheidippides in this connection.) The questions of language here raised involve such niceties as the use of nymphè (nymph) in the sense of *daughter*, and of tithênè (nurse) for *mother*. Such evidence will weigh but lightly with those of us who know how hard it is to ascertain whether a certain word or usage is at the present moment limited to Old or New England!

It is doubtless the imperial mastership of Homer—that is, of Ionic epic—that has enforced here, as so widely elsewhere, the outward uniformity of dialect and vocabulary. Yet within and beneath these forms there is a wide diversity in feeling, in scale, and in the point of view. In the midst of the great Apollo hymn, even, the centre of interest shifts so completely from Delos to Pytho, that most scholars divide the traditional text, and offer us two poems, each presumably of local origin, to the Delian and the Delphic god

(see *infra*, pp. 125, ff.). So the stately figure of the Mourning Mother, in the Eleusinian poem, is a type of maternity remote indeed from the nymph who in this very hymn to Pan, united with Hermes, bore the child—

"Goat-footed, doubly-horned, sweet-laughing, delighting in uproar,"

and, straightway, on beholding him—

"Leaped to her feet and fled, deserting her infant unnourished."

"Probably rather late," I regret to say, is the general verdict also on the delightful hymn, Dionysos, or the Pirates, which Andrew Lang has rendered in masterly prose. The ill-starred attack on the youthful god, with his sportive transformation of his assailants into dolphins, is often represented in works of art, notably in the Bacchic frieze of the Lysicrates Monument, the most beautiful little structure in Athens. This building was itself a memorial of a victory gained in the Dionysiac theatre, though not in a dramatic contest. We may, perhaps, set here a version already published.

"DIONYSOS, OR THE PIRATES.

"Glorious Semelè's child I will summon to mind, Dionysos;
How he appeared on the brink of the sea forever unresting,
On a projecting crag, assuming the guise of a stripling
Blooming in youth; and in beauty his dark hair floated about him.
Purple the cloak he was wearing across his vigorous shoulders.

"Presently hove in sight a band of Tyrrhenian pirates,
Borne in a well-rowed vessel along the wine-coloured waters.
Hither their evil destiny guided them. When they beheld him,
Unto each other they nodded; then forth they darted, and straightway
Seized him, and haled him aboard their vessel, exultant in spirit,
Since they thought him a child of kings, who of Zeus are supported.
Then were they eager to bind him in fetters that could not be sundered.
Yet was he held not with bonds, for off and afar did the osiers
Fall from his hands and feet, and left him sitting and smiling
Out of his dusky eyes! But when their pilot beheld it,
Straightway uplifting his voice, he shouted aloud to his comrades:

'Madmen! Who is this god ye would seize and control with your fetters?
Mighty is he! Our well-rowed ship is unable to hold him.
Verily this is Zeus, or else it is archer Apollo,
Or, it may be, Poseidon,—for nowise perishing mortals
Does he resemble, but gods who make their home on Olympos.
Bring him, I pray you, again to the darksome shore, and release him
Straightway. Lay not a finger upon him, lest in his anger
He may arouse the impetuous gusts, and the furious storm-wind.'

"Thus he spoke, but the captain, in words of anger, assailed him:
'Fellow, look to the wind, and draw at the sail of the vessel,
Holding the cordage in hand: we men will care for the captive.
He shall come, as I think, to Egypt, or may be to Cyprus,
Or to the Hyperboréans, or farther, and surely shall tell us
Finally who are his friends, and reveal to us all his possessions,
Name us his brethren too: for a god unto us has betrayed him.'

"So had he spoken, and hoisted his mast and the sail of his vessel.
Fairly upon their sail was blowing a breeze, and the cordage

Tightened: and presently then most wondrous chances befell them.
First of all things, wine through the black impetuous vessel,
Fragrant and sweet to the taste, was trickling; the odour ambrosial
Rose in the air; and terror possessed them all to behold it.
Presently near to the top of the sail a vine had extended,
Winding hither and hither, with many a cluster dependent.
Round and about their mast an ivy was duskily twining,
Rich in its blossoms, and fair was the fruit that had risen upon it.
Every rowlock a garland wore.

"And when they beheld this
Instantly then to the pilot they shouted to hurry the vessel
Near to the land; but the god appeared as a lion among them,
Terrible, high on the bow, and loudly he roared; and amidships
Made he appear to their eyes a shaggy-necked bear as a portent.
Eagerly rose she erect, and high on the prow was the lion,
Eying them grimly askance. To the stern they darted in terror.
There, at the side of the pilot, the man of wiser perception,

Dazed and affrighted they stood; and, suddenly leaping upon them,
On their captain he seized. They, fleeing from utter destruction,
Into the sacred water plunged, as they saw it, together,
Turning to dolphins. The god, for the pilot having compassion,
Held him back, and gave him happiness, speaking as follows:
'Have no fear, oh innocent suppliant, dear to my spirit.
Semelè's offspring am I, Dionysos, the leader in revels,
Born of the daughter of Cadmos, to Zeus in wedlock united.'
—Greeting, oh child of the fair-faced Semelè! Never the minstrel
Who is forgetful of thee may fashion a song that is pleasing!"

This may be described as the longest of the short hymns, or as the least of the "great" ones. Though, perhaps, still too brief for independent recitation, this tale certainly exceeds the limits of a mere formal invocation. Its Attic origin is generally conceded. May it not have been used as a sort of "prologue in the theatre," to use the phrase applied by Goethe to a very different performance?

Certainly *such* tales as this regarding Dionysos,

first sung and danced in mimicry, then elaborated into dialogues, were the earliest materials for the action in Athenian tragedy. Indeed, the adventures of Dionysos were probably — not merely the favourite but—the only permissible subjects in early dramas. Even in the Periclean age, the popular voice demanded that every dramatist retain, at least in the chorus of an obligatory afterpiece, the sportive satyrs, who in the Lysicratean frieze, and other versions, are seen sharing this very escapade with their master. A curious idiom of later Attic recalls this earlier devotion of the drama to Bacchos alone. Against any unseemly digression or discursiveness, no matter where, the criticism was worded, *οὐδὲν πρὸς Διόνυσον*!—"That's nothing to do *with Dionysos!*" These considerations alone might justify our recalling this earliest adequate glimpse of the merry wine-god. The earliest, we say, for in Homer he appears only very slightly, fleeing in terror before a mortal, the Thracian king Lycurgus. And with wine he had in Homer's mind probably no close connection. At least, the wondrous liquor

which laid Polyphemos low was a gift to Odysseus,—not from a Bacchic source at all, but from Apollo's priest. Here again we chance upon another reminder of the un-Homeric—and post-Homeric—origin of these poems.

We have been led on to indicate the especial importance of this poem as a crosslight upon the Dionysiac drama. But each sustained hymn in our collection is similarly a valuable original document for the history of Greek worship and myth. In this regard they form a quarry which has hardly been duly worked.

Perhaps the most important poem in the series which has not yet been mentioned at all is the merry account of Hermes' precocious infancy and thievish pranks. This has been freely, and delightfully, translated by the poet Shelley. It is a pity this unique genius did not leave us a version of the Demeter hymn as well. In some of its characteristics, such as the consciousness of marvellous life astir in all nature, and in rapturous love for flowers, it would have been especially congenial to him. Or, perhaps, we should rather say, that Shelley's ethereally

sensitive nature enabled him to reproduce some phases of Greek feeling from which most modern men, even of poetic soul, are alienated by their more artificial life. But Shelleys are rarely to be utilized as translators,—though Mr. Arnold thought it his most enduring work!

As a whole, these Hymns, with their allusions to naïve early myths, and hints of local cults, should attract greater interest, especially in our time, when so much attention is being drawn to the common elements in all earnest religious creeds.

NOTE.—This body of poetry offers the most striking illustration of the gaps and limitations in our English scholarship, to which Prof. Mahaffy calls attention so wittily and so often. There is *no* edition of these Greek poems with English notes for the student, and they are passed by in silence in the two best popular discussions on Hellenic poesy, Symonds' "Greek Poets" and Jebb's "Greek Poetry"! Mahaffy himself discusses them in interesting but cursory fashion. The best literary translation was for centuries the free Elizabethan version in rhyme by George Chapman —the same man whose Iliad Keats has made doubly illustrious. This did not, of course, include the Demeter hymn, which was rediscovered in the eighteenth century. There is now a creditable, but little known, prose version

of all the poems, by Edgar, published in Edinburgh by James Thin. The volume of Greek text with helpful German notes by Gemoll (Leipsic, 1886) has not fulfilled the editor's confident expectation of displacing Baumeister's edition with Latin notes (1860). Both are useful. Prof. Sterrett (Ginn, Boston) has edited the five greater hymns, printing them so as to show clearly their heavy debt to Homer. An important critical text has recently appeared, and perhaps we may hope for a student's edition.

V.

THE HOMERIC HYMN TO APOLLO.

THE first among the Homeric Hymns in our collection is a poem addressed to Apollo, in 546 hexameters. The earlier portion (vers. 1–178) centres about Delos as the chief point of interest. The latter section, again, has chiefly to do with the legends of Delphi. Indeed, nearly all recent editors have divided the hymn into two. The exact truth as to the original form can hardly be ascertained. The ancient allusions seem, for the most part, to be rather to a single poem. That some passages have been inserted where they do not fit, is certain. Perhaps a later attempt was made to incorporate into a single frame nearly all the early hymn-material referring to the Apollo-group. The great antiquity of some passages at least, and the intrinsic interest

of the subject, will justify its exposition here. Incidentally, some of the sutures and abrupt transitions may be indicated.

The opening passage itself has a certain abruptness.

"I will remember and not be forgetful of archer Apollo,
Who by the gods is dreaded within Zeus' house as he enters.
Straightway all of them leap to their feet as he nearer approaches,
Out of their seats, so soon as his shining weapons he levels" (vers. 1–4).

Then occurs a sudden change of tense which may be merely accidental. Possibly the poet may himself have hesitated between a description of Apollo's *first* appearance, and of his habitual entrance among the immortals.

"Leto only remained, with Zeus who delights in the thunder.
She indeed unstrung his bow and covered his quiver.
Then with her hands she took from his stalwart shoulders his weapons.
These at the side of a column she hung, in the hall of the father,
Down from a golden peg. To a chair she led him and set him.

Then in a golden beaker the father offered him nectar,
Pledging his well-loved son: and the other divinities likewise.
There they were seated together: and reverend Leto was joyful,
Seeing that he she had borne was a valiant god and an archer" (vers. 5–13).

This mention of Leto has apparently drawn hither—perhaps at first to the margin only, and then, by a copyist's error, into the text—what looks like a brief separate hymn to Leto, certainly an appeal to her directly, beginning—

"Hail, oh Leto the blessed, for glorious children thou barest" (ver. 14).

After these five lines (14–18) we come to an invocation of Apollo himself, with an opening verse which tends to justify the traditional title of "hymns" for this whole group of poems.

"How may I hymn thee aright, who in hymns already aboundest?
Everywhere, O Apollo, the pastures of song are extended:
Over the mainland, mother of cattle, and over the islands."
(Vers. 19–21.)

The question which he has just asked, the poet presently answers with another—

"Shall I relate how Leto did bear thee, a joy unto mortals?
That was in wavegirt Delos. The darksome billows, around her,
Driven along by the shrill-voiced winds, were hurrying landward.
Issuing thence, thou among all mortal men art a ruler."
(Vers. 25, 27–29.)

We naturally suppose the copious list of Aegean isles and seaward cities, next recorded, indicates the wide sway of Apollo. This is indeed indirectly true, perhaps, though the long sentence ends unexpectedly with a reach backward. The list is prevailingly Ionic, despite its beginning.

"All whoso are in Crete contained, or the people of Athens,
In Euboea, for ships renowned, or island Aegina,—
Or upon Thracian Athos, or Pelion's loftiest summits,
Or in Lesbos the holy, abode of Aeolian Makar,
Chios, that brightest of islands is set in the midst of the waters,
Samos, abounding in springs, precipitous Mycale's summits,—
Ay, and in Naxos also, and Paros, and rocky Rheneia,

—Unto them all, ere Apollo was born, came Leto in travail,
If some one of the lands might offer a home to her offspring.*
Greatly affrighted were they, and quaked. Not one of them ventured,
Even the richest, to proffer a shelter for Phoebos Apollo.
So the imperial Leto had fared, till she came unto Delos:
Then these wingèd words she uttered, and asked her the question:
'Delos, art thou content to become the abode of my offspring,
Phoebos Apollo, and rear to his honour a glorious temple?
Never another will cleave unto thee, nor hold thee in honour.
Nowise rich thou'lt be, as I deem, in sheep or in cattle,
Neither abundant the vineyards, nor countless the trees thou producest.
Yet, if thou bearest upon thee a temple of Archer Apollo,
All mankind shall bring their sacred offerings hither,
Ever abundant for thee shall the odour arise of the victims'" (vers. 30–58).

It would seem that some prophetic knowledge of Apollo and his character had spread through Heaven and Earth, or at least had reached the

* Leto, it will be remembered, is persecuted by jealous Hera.

knowledge of Delos,—whether she be the island, or its guardian-divinity, or an inseparable fusion of both in one. Such imperfect knowledge of the future is often ascribed to the Greek gods. The most notable case is Zeus' peril if he weds Thetis, which is fully made known only to Prometheus, through his mother Themis, the *seer*. Even Apollo the augur trips notably in this very poem (*vide infra*, pp. 143–145). Such strokes are natural wherever men delineate gods in their own likeness. With Delos' prompt consent is mingled one note of dread, inspired by her own humility.

"Leto, but this word, only, affrights me, nor will I conceal it.
Truly they say that Apollo will prove exceedingly haughty;
He will rule as a mighty monarch among the immortal
Gods, and mortal men who abide in the bounteous cornland.
Therefore greatly affrighted am I in heart and in spirit,
Lest, so soon as Apollo, thy child, shall look on the sunshine,
He, in contempt of the island, because I am rugged and rocky,
Spurn with his feet and into the briny abysses may plunge me.

He to another land will pass, which suiteth his pleasure.
So then only the dusky seals and polyps within me
Their untroubled abode will make, since men will be lacking" (vers. 66–78).

Leto reassures her, with the most sacred oath of gods—

"Earth be witness now, and wide-spread Heaven above us,
Witness, Styx, with thy trickling stream, most mighty and holy
Pledge to the ever-blessèd gods whose life is eternal:
Verily here shall abide the enclosure and altar of Phoebos
Ever, and thee shall he hold above all others in honour."
(Vers. 84–88.)

Leto's travail continues nine days and nights. She is consoled by the other female divinities, but the goddess whose function it should be to relieve her is detained by Hera in her jealous rage. Finally, summoned by Iris without Hera's knowledge, and bribed with a wondrous necklace of amber and gold nine cubits long, Eileithuia arrives. Apollo is the most precocious of children, thanks perhaps in part to the nectar and ambrosia which Themis straightway offers him instead of his mother's milk. Instantly

bursting his swaddling-bands—doubtless a rather naïve indication of his growth in a moment to full stature — he proclaims to the admiring goddesses—

"Dear unto me be the harp, and the curving bow and the arrows;
Yea, and the truthful counsel of Zeus unto men will I utter" (vers. 131, 132).

So Apollo at once announces himself as lord of music, of archery, and, above all, of prophecy to men. Delos blossomed all over with golden flowers in her joy, and felt both pride in, and affection for, her stately foster-child.

Here, again, there is a change of tense, which brings us, with hardly a breath for transition, into the poet's own day. The passage which follows is largely quoted, with slight variations, by Thucydides (circ. 400 B.C.), in his account of Delos (Thuc., ii. § 104). It is interesting to note that this earliest witness cites the verses unquestioningly as Homer's, and that the poem from which they are taken is for him (despite its length) "the prelude of Apollo." Further evidence, *e.g.* imitations by Theognis and others,

strengthens the impression that this is among the oldest, if not the oldest, of all the hymns. Nevertheless, the moment we approach (as at present) any definite and realistic picture of human life, we see at once that we are in an age much later than the Homeric period proper. The change of tense we just mentioned occurs after three lines.

"Thou, oh lord of the silvern bow, Far-shooter Apollo,
Sometimes over the slopes didst march of precipitous Cynthos,
Sometimes thou didst fare to the dwellings of men and the temples.
Dear all outlooks are unto thee, and the lofty mountains'
Topmost peaks, and the rivers that down to the sea are descending.
More than in all, oh Phoebos, thy heart is in Delos delighted,
Where in their trailing robes unto thee the Ionians gather,
They themselves, and their modest wives as well, and the children.
There they do honour to thee with boxing, dancing, and singing" (vers. 140–149).

All manly rivalry, tending to perfect the heroic virtues, is to the Greek essentially pious. Pindar sings rapturously of the cock, who fights

for no baser motive than mere love of victory; and a cock-fight has a prominent place among the carvings on the high-priest's marble chair in the Athenian theatre.

"So they take their delight, whenever the games are appointed.
One would believe them to be immortal and ageless for ever,
Whoso met them, when the Ionians gather together.
Then he the charm of them all would behold, and delight in their spirit,
Seeing the men of the race, and the women gracefully girdled.
Fleet are the vessels they bring as well, and many the treasures.
—This is a marvel, too, whose glory never may perish,
Even the Delian maids, attendant on Archer Apollo."
(Vers. 150–157.)

This singer has evidently left far behind him —or never knew—the haughty monarchs, the subservient folk, of the Homeric age. Here we have no royal and courtly ceremonial, surely. These are the sports, this, too, is the poet, of a free people. It is interesting that the very next lines touch upon that same custom of the

"prelude," out of which all these poems may have arisen.

"When they first have uttered in hymns their praise of Apollo,
Next is Leto's turn, and Artemis, hurler of arrows.
Then they remember the heroes of ancient days, and the women,
Singing their hymn: and the tribes of mortal men are enchanted" (vers. 158–161).

That is, the invocation of the local gods must precede the epic recital, the tales of demigods and heroines. The use of "hymn" for the latter poetry also, however, is a timely reminder, how little our distinction between *secular* and *religious* would mean to an ancient Greek, of the earlier or the later time. Helen, the daughter of Zeus, or Odysseus, the especial charge of Athene, was a subject quite as fitting for the holy festival as was the direct invocation of Pallas or her sire which preceded it.

The next three lines are strange and curious:—

"Speech of all mankind, and even their castanets' rattle
They can mimic, and every man would say that he heard them
Speak his speech: so fairly and well is their minstrelsy fitted" (vers. 162–164).

Whether the "rattle of the castanets" means the musical accompaniment generally, or only the rhythm, the *tempo* of the dance and song, which might vary perceptibly from island to island, or town to town, is hard to decide. The Christian reader will be involuntarily reminded of the tongues of Pentecost.

After a single line addressed to the gods of Delos—

"Come, be thou, oh Apollo, together with Artemis, gracious" (ver. 164),

the singer suddenly turns directly to his own special audience of Delian maidens. Why the women are his chief or sole auditors is not made plain. Thucydides' words are: "That there was a contest in music, and that they used to come to contend with each other, he (Homer) again makes clear in those verses which are from the same prelude. For, hymning the Delian chorus of women, he ended his eulogy in these lines, wherein he also mentioned himself,—

"'Greeting unto you all: and be ye of me hereafter
Mindful, when some other of men that on earth have abiding

Hither may come, an outworn stranger, and ask you the question:

"Oh, ye maidens, and who for you is the sweetest of minstrels,

Whoso hither doth come, in whom ye most are delighted?"

Then do ye all, I pray, with one voice answer and tell him,

"Blind is the man, and in Chios abounding in crags is his dwelling.

He it is whose songs shall all be supreme in the future."'"

(Vers. 166–173.)

Here Thucydides' quotation ends, but a few lines complete what the editors regard as the "Delian hymn." The singer declares that he will spread his own fame through the wide world. The close may be rendered—

"Yet will I not cease from hymning the archer Apollo,
Lord of the silvern bow, who is offspring of fair-tressed Leto" (vers. 177, 178).

This not too modest old man has, at this moment, little in common with the elder epic poet, who could so effectively conceal his own identity, while unrolling before us the splendid tapestry of Trojan story. And he who, standing on the mound of Hissarlik, or at the extinct crater's edge on topmost Ida, still listens to the

idle tale of Homer's blindness, must himself be hopelessly blind—and deaf as well! Yet this passage is the probable starting-point of two persistent legends concerning Homer: that he was of Chios, and that he was blind.

In turning away from Delos, we may mention the only earlier allusion to the island. Odysseus, flattering Nausicaa, likens her to a graceful young palm he had seen shooting up beside Apollo's Delian altar: "For thither also I came," he adds, "and much folk with me." *

Perhaps we should ask our printer to do outward homage to the prevailing editorial judgment, that divides the great hymn at the point now reached—the one hundred and seventy-eighth verse. That the poets—or one poet—seemed to take farewell of the song here, may fairly be conceded. One late author, Aristides (ii. 558), citing this same passage, says positively, "Talking with the Delian maids, *and closing the Prooimion.*" Many think, however, that

* Odyssey, bk. vi., vers. 162-164. "Art and Humanity in Homer," p. 221.

Aristides merely had Thucydides before him, and cited without knowledge of the hymn at first hand. (Cf. Gemoll, p. 114.)

Nevertheless, the text as it lies before us hardly makes it easy to start the new and independent Delphic hymn which we next expect. When Xenophon's Hellenic history begins, "But after that," we say, "He is continuing Thucydides," or "A leaf has been lost"—or both. Little better is the case here. The next three verses seem to form a strophe by themselves, but while neither a beginning nor a closing strain, they do equally little to bridge the transition to Delphi—

> "Lycia, oh Lord, and lovely Maeonia own thy dominion;
> Over Miletos thou rulest, the sea-washed city of longing;
> Monarch art thou, as well, of Delos girt by the waters."
> (Vers. 179-181.)

Next we find a passage of twenty-five lines tolerably complete in itself. Apollo, playing the lyre, and clad in fragrant robes, comes to "rocky Pytho." This mention of Delphi seems timely; but in an instant more—

> "Thence from earth to Olympos, as swift as a thought, he departed" (ver. 186).

There, in Zeus' abode, is a rather over-crowded assemblage of the gods to whom—

"All of the Muses together, with beautiful voices, responsive
Sang of the wondrous gifts of the gods, and the sorrows of mortals:
What they endure at the hands of gods whose life is eternal,
How they live in folly and feebleness, wholly unable
Safeguard against old age, or a cure for death, to discover."
(Vers. 189–193.)

Those familiar with Greek poetry of any age will not be wholly surprised at this discordant note of pessimism. We may suppose the theme is an agreeable one, to divine and immortal hearers. Amid this throng of—

"Fair-tressed Graces and fair-minded Hours" (ver. 194),

Artemis is stateliest in the dance, while the harper Apollo is the leader of all,—

"Stepping graceful and high, and the splendour glimmers about him,
Flash of the gleaming feet, and of garments cunningly woven" (vers. 202, 203).

The hearts of his parents, Leto and Zeus, are filled with pride. If the poet had set himself the

task of outdoing the earlier singer who revealed to us the more quiet scene in Olympos at Apollo's first arrival (*supra*, vers. 1–13), he has succeeded; but Delphi is quite forgotten. Indeed the later quest of Apollo makes it clear that the allusion to Pytho at this point is out of place.

The poem pauses and hesitates, as it were, repeating the query already familiar—

"How may I hymn thee aright, who in hymns already aboundest?" (ver. 207 = ver. 19).

Omitting the six most corrupt and hopeless verses, in which the suggestion is feebly made that Apollo's amours might be the best subject for song, we accept the nobler alternative:—

"Or shall I rather relate how first, Far-shooter Apollo,
Thou over earth didst wander, for mortals an oracle seeking?
Thou in Pieria first didst make thy descent from Olympos" (vers. 214–216).

Now, at last, the real current of the poem begins to run, and the stately march toward the Pythian fane may well be a far-off reminiscence of the time when the Apollo-worship, the fairest

flower of early Greek civilization, was indeed borne reverently on to southward, from hill to hill, from commune to commune, till it rested for a thousand years on rocky Pytho. Descending through Thessaly, the route runs across Euboea to Boeotia. The passage is by no means a bare unpoetical catalogue. Thus the extreme antiquity of Apollo's progress is effectively indicated when Boeotia is reached—

"Next thou wert come to the site of Thebè, covered by forests;
None among mortal men were as yet in Thebè abiding,
Nay, there were yet no beaten paths to be seen, nor a highway
Over the plain so rich in wheat, but only the woodland.
Thence thou upon thy way didst fare, Far-shooter Apollo."
(Vers. 225–229.)

Apollo is seeking a fit site for his temple and a place of prophecy, and this last oft-repeated line is doubtless an imitation of the verse which becomes almost a refrain in the ninth book of the Odyssey:

"Thence did we fare on our way, exceedingly troubled in spirit" (Odys. ix. 62, 105, 565; x. 133).

The chief pause of Apollo is near "grassy Haliartos" and "many-towered Ocalea," at the spring Delphousa, or Telphousa. The resemblance of this name to Delphi probably gave a starting-point for the myth-makers, or even stimulated the invention of our poet, who has himself, as we shall see, an unpoetic penchant toward etymology. Some grass-grown prehistoric foundations without superstructure, and the overarching natural rock from which the spring appears to struggle forth, would help to explain the incident, if explanation be desired.

Apollo, then, is so charmed by the spot, that he announces to Telphousa his intention to erect there a—

> "Beautiful temple,
> Seat of an oracle for mankind,"

which will be a place of general resort from the Peloponnese, the mainland, and the islands. This is, indirectly, of course, a sketch of what Delphi has become at the time when this hymn is composed. The god actually lays the broad foundations: but now, for some reason unexplained, the

nymph's anger is aroused. She craftily suggests, that the thronged high-road, evidently near at hand (or destined to exist there), the noise of teams watering their mules and horses at her fountain, will distract men's thoughts from the temple and oracle, which demand a less accessible and more peaceful spot.

"Nay, but in Crisa, beneath Parnassos' ridges erect them.
Never the din of the beautiful chariots there will re-echo,
Nor will the clatter of steeds ring round your well-built altar" (vers. 269–271).

Since Apollo accepts this reasoning without question, it is thought the verses must have been composed before the institution, under the divine sanction, of periodical chariot-races at Crisa itself, which is assigned to about the year 580 B.C.

To his final abode Apollo now quickly makes his way :—

"Then unto Crisa, beneath snow-capt Parnassos, thou camest.
Westward turned is the mountain's shoulder: the valley below it
Rough and hollow extends, underneath the o'ershadowing ledges" (vers. 282–284).

Announcing the glorious future of his shrine in the very words he had already used to Telphousa, and apparently untroubled by the grave lapse from prophetic foresight thus so plainly exposed,—

> "Phoebos Apollo set the foundations,
> Wide and exceedingly far extended, straightway; upon them
> Laid was a threshold of stone by Trophonios and Agamedes,
> Sons of Erginos, and dear to the gods whose life is eternal.
> Round it a temple was built by unnumbered races of mortals,
> Fashioned of shapely stones, in song to be famous for ever."
> (Vers. 290, 299.)

These earliest of architects, dear to Apollo and the other immortals, are doubly famous through the tale of their end. As the greatest of blessings, in answer to their prayer, a painless death, while asleep, was granted to them both; still another reminder that the early Greek was quite too wide-eyed not to see the pathetic side of life, and, especially, of old age. (As we write, the similar death of Massachusetts' favourite son has called forth many utterances of a sentiment closely akin to that feeling which is implied in this and similar Greek stories.)

It is a curious example how the accretions of

marvellous detail gather about a simpler core of legend, that in Pausanias' time the local myth at Delphi named the temple of these brother-architects, not as the first, but as the *fourth* structure in order of time. The first rude construction had been a hut of laurel-boughs; the second, yet more strangely, of bees' wings and wax; the third a temple of bronze. (The essayist may be permitted to refer to his own paper on these and other curious Delphic legends, *Atlantic Monthly*, p. 801, December, 1889.)

Next we have a brief mention of the fair-flowing fountain at Delphi, and of the dragon that, after slaying many men and many cattle, "working much mischief on earth," was herself destroyed by Apollo's bow, at the spring.

But from this point fifty verses (vers. 305–355) are filled with the widest digression of all. The origin of Typhaon—produced by Hera, without sire, in emulation, after Pallas' birth from her father's head—is rehearsed with much vivid but crude detail. The slight thread of connection is the assertion, that he was at birth given in

charge, "evil to the evil," to this same dragon. Again returning to Pytho, the poet gives nearly twenty wearisome verses (vers. 356–376) to the death-writhings of the monster, and to the malodorous derivation of the sanctuary's early name from the root *pyth*, "to putrefy," in allusion to the decaying body of the serpent. (The rival derivation, "place of inquiry," is pleasanter, but sins against *quantity*.)

Now the beauty of Telphousa's environment recurs to Apollo's mind, and with it comes the angry but tardy conviction, that it was for her own renown, not his, she had beguiled him to seek the lonely Parnassian dell. So he returns for a moment to her, and hides her source under high-piled rocks—which, I believe, still remain as witnesses to the truth of the tale. He also erects near the stream an altar, whereat offerings were still made, at least in the singer's day, to the Telphusian Apollo.

It next occurs to Apollo's mind, that he requires men, to celebrate his rites, and to be his faithful servants in rocky Pytho. While pondering hereon, he descries a ship sailing the winy

deep, manned by Cretans, from Cnossos, the city of Minos. Straightway he hastens to intercept them, and in the guise of a monstrous dolphin leaps into their vessel. Remembering that the original Greek form of this fish's name is *Delphis*, we shall already guess that the poet is beginning his last and boldest assay at etymologic mythologizing. Driven by divine command about the whole Peloponnesos, the weary ship enters the Corinthian gulf, and at last, reaching the port of Crisa, she grates upon the pebbly beach.

"Then leaped forth from the vessel the lord, Far-shooter Apollo,
Like to a star at noon. Unnumbered the rays that about him
Flitted and flashed, while high to the heavens the splendour extended.
Into his shrine in the midst of his precious tripods he entered" (vers. 440–443).

There are many naïve touches in all such myths. The tripods to which the poet alludes, to which he could indeed hardly refrain from proudly alluding, were, of course, votive offerings from thankful men, bestowed *since* the activity of the oracle began. The fire now lighted in the sanctuary

affrights the maids and dames of Crisa, which we had supposed till now was utterly desolate and uninhabited, no less than the Theban site mentioned before.

Once again laying aside his divine glory, this time for the figure of a goodly mortal youth, Apollo is in time to meet the bewildered Cretans at the beach, and addresses to them the Homeric inquiry, whether they sail the seas for trade and barter, or risking their lives in piracy. He calms their fears, and bids them put in to the land as is the traders' wont. Something of his divinity lingers about him, for the Cretan captain doubtingly answers—

"Stranger,—for nowise like unto mortal men is your semblance,
Stature or shape, but rather to gods whose life is eternal,—
Potent and great one, hail! May the gods all blessings accord you.
But do you tell me truly, that so I also may know it:
Who is this folk? What land? What men have here their abiding?" (vers. 464–468).

To their frank confession—

"Hither some one of immortals, against our wishes, has led us" (ver. 473),

Apollo at last responds in his own proper character—

"Strangers, ye who have dwelt in the woodland city of Cnossos
Till this time, ye now shall go no longer, returning,
Unto your lovely town, and the beautiful dwelling of each man,
Nor to your faithful wives! but here my opulent temple
Ye shall guard, that is held by men full many in honour.
I myself am a son of Zeus, my name is Apollo.
Over the mighty abyss of the waters I guided you hither."
(Vers. 475–481).

This tale of Cretans brought to Delphi seems to have no traceable origin, save the mere fact, generally accepted, that Minos' folk were the first, or among the first, of Greeks to wrest from their Phoenician rivals the art of navigation and the profits of commerce. At the god's bidding the wanderers now bring their ship to land, and, stepping ashore, set up on the beach an altar to Delphinian Apollo. Then, after supper and sacrifice, the final march Delphi-ward begins. Phoebos' figure reminds us of his former appearance on Olympos, as he leads the way with lyre in hand,—

"Gracefully stepping and high; and dancing followed the Cretans,
Singing a paean of praise" (vers. 516, 517).

Yet, when they arrive at the temple and shrine, some doubt arises once again, and the Cretan captain asks—

"O thou, lord, who afar from our friends and the land of our fathers
Hither hast led us—for so, it appears, it has suited thy pleasure—
How may we prosper now? For this we bid thee to tell us.
This is a land not lovely nor fruitful, nor goodly its meadows" (vers. 526–529).

The smiling god bids them put aside all anxious cares, all thought of grievous toil. Their only task shall be to slay the kine, which countless races of men will bring to them for sacrifice.

"Guard ye my temple well, and receive ye the races of mortals
Hither assembling" (vers. 538, 539).

We are within eight lines of the close. The hymn thus far seems composed in exultant spirit, doubtless for a Delphic brotherhood which

believed itself the invincible and inviolate descendants from those Cretan guardians, who had been thus divinely led to the primeval shrine. If this is rightly guessed, and this great hymn was indeed created for such a body, then the next five lines may well be a colophon added in less happy days; or, they may even have been supplied by new lords of the sanctuary, boldly justifying, out of the divine mouth itself, their subjugation of the traditional guardians. At any rate Apollo's final speech now closes thus:—

"Yet if a foolish word shall occur hereafter, or action,
Insolence, such as is common among mankind who are mortal,
Then shall other men in that day be your commanders,
At their hands shall you be perforce subdued, and for ever.
Verily all is said: in your memory well be it guarded."
(Vers. 540–544.)

We are not likely ever to know what historical event was here indicated. In the Iliad, rocky Pytho is already proverbial for its wealth, which must have been bestowed as gifts from grateful pilgrims to the seat of augury. A passage of the Odyssey expressly asserts that Agamemnon

sought there, beforehand, information as to the issue of the Trojan war. The oracle he obtained had all the ambiguity and vagueness so common in later days. Whatever this strange far hint of Amphictyonic victory, or other Sacred War, may mean, all is, indeed, said, save the familiar transition from prelude to epic lay, in a couplet which has, perhaps, been transferred by a later copyist hither from its place at the close of several among the briefer hymns—

"Greeting, then, unto thee, O son of Zeus and of Leto,
I of thee and, as well, of another song will be mindful."

VI.

THE HOMERIC HYMN TO DEMETER.

PERHAPS the most pathetic and significant of all Greek myths is the tale of the daughter untimely snatched by Hades to his underworld, and of the divine mother who finds her chief consolation in administering to humanity's needs. As Walter Pater reminds us, this myth was of very gradual growth. From Homer it cannot be shown that Demeter and Persephone are even closely akin! Demeter appears occasionally, in the epics, but only as "the perfectly fresh and blithe goddess of the fields." She even yields in the ploughed-land on one occasion to the embraces of a mortal lover, Iasion, from whom jealous Zeus exacts his life as a penalty for this presumption. Persephone, again, stern queen of ghosts, from whose

realm the canny Odysseus flees, lest she freeze him to stone with the Gorgon-head,—the Homeric Persephone, I say, gives no hint of any memories or longings for the green fields of her childhood, if childhood she ever had.

It is once more in Hesiod's Theogony that we must seek the first kernel of the purer and nobler legend, the far-spreading later growth. In three verses, only, Hesiod tells us :—

"Next was the fruitful Demeter to Zeus in wedlock united.
She gave birth to Persephone, white-armed, whom Aïdoneus
Snatched from her mother away: and Zeus the Adviser
permitted."

The original suggestion for this myth can hardly have failed to come from the apparent death of vegetation in Winter, and its happy restoration to mother Nature's loving arms for the longer season of Summer. But it is always an error to carry such a key in hand to explain each detail of a living legend. So Heracles and his twelve labours may well have been, to the first story-teller, consciously connected with the sun and his twelve zodiacal signs; but around that rallying-point many a capital tale has been

invented—and others, too, which properly belonged to other heroes Hellenic and barbarian, have drifted thither—till no allegorical analysis can spoil even a tithe of them any more! Certainly into this land of marvel, where the magic narcissus blooms, we may pass only if we bring with us the unspoiled faith, the unquestioning imagination, of childhood. For our children are happily not yet born—as Hesiod has forewarned us—with "grey hair upon the temples," and they still may enter the Elysian fields of the Hellenic prime. If any reader doubts this, let him test his dullest or most practical boy by repeating to him this very tale of the lost daughter, from Hawthorne's "Wonderbook," where Persephone herself is reduced (rather boldly but daintily, and with true Hawthornesque genius) to the stature and the years of childhood.

The poem must have been inspired, probably composed, at Eleusis itself. It abounds in local allusions, and also in references, no doubt many more than we can now verify, to the noble cult of the Mother and Daughter. We can enter upon no discussion as to what the Eleusinian

mysteries really were. That the belief in an immortal life, and even in some form of resurrection, was there illustrated and strengthened, seems inevitable from the very essence of the Persephone myth itself. The poet is, perhaps, as early as the seventh century B.C. There is, I believe, no distinct allusion to Athenian rule in Eleusis, though in this the Attic poet—if such he was—of course merely restores the conditions of the earlier day which he is recalling. The absence of Dionysos, and of Triptolemos as the first teacher of agriculture, may indicate that we have here the earliest and simplest form of the Eleusinian myth.

Among the rather numerous classical poems upon the same theme yet extant (all of which Mr. Pater discusses), none approaches, on the whole, the noble simplicity of this earliest hymn to Demeter. Yet each adds touches, picturesque if not always congruous, like the many hands that piece on and piece out an historic English country-house. Even frolicsome Ovid feels for once in full the pathetic majesty of the theme. He, in particular, makes Eleusinian Keleos not

a king at all, but rather a poor old man like his own Philemon; and almost persuades us to accept this bold variation upon the imperishable tale. Many modern versions or allusions to the theme are familiar to every lover of poetry. Last of all, Tennyson, in his old age, has felt the charm of the myth, though his poem by no means displaces, or even rivals, the antique renderings of the subject.

All which may justify the selection of this Homeric hymn for a sustained experiment in hexameter translation. In order to avoid frequent interruption for comment and discussion, we may refer once for all to Mr. Pater's careful yet imaginative account of this, and of the other classical poems upon Demeter, in his precious "Greek Studies." Professor Louis Dyer gives a more analytical treatment—and also a glimpse at the archaeology of Eleusis—in his interesting and valuable book, "The Gods in Greece."

"HYMN TO DEMETER.

"First Demeter I sing, that fair-tressed reverend goddess,
Her, and her daughter the slender-ankled, whom once Aïdoneus

Stole—for wide-eyed Zeus, who is lord of the thunder, permitted.
Quite unaware was the mother, Fruitgiver, the Bringer of spring-time.
She—Persephone—played with Okeanos' deep-bosomed daughters,
Plucking the blossoms—the beautiful violets, roses, and crocus,
Iris, and hyacinth, too, that grew in the flowery meadow."

The names were probably applied by the poet to different plants than those which they call to our minds; but their poetic associations are essentially unchanged.

"Earth, by command of Zeus, and to please All-welcoming Pluto,
Caused narcissus to grow, as a lure for the lily-faced maiden.
Wonderful was it in beauty. Amazement on all who beheld it
Fell, both mortal men and gods whose life is eternal.
Out of a single root it had grown with clusters an hundred.
All wide Heaven above was filled with delight at the fragrance,
Earth was laughing as well, and the briny swell of the waters.
She, in her wonder, to pluck that beautiful plaything extended

Both her hands: but that moment the wide-wayed earth
underneath her
Yawned, in the Nysian plain; and the monarch, Receiver
of all men,
Many-named son of Kronos, arose, with his horses im-
mortal,—
—Seized her against her will, and upon his chariot golden
Bore her lamenting away;—and the hills re-echoed her
outcry.
Kronos' son she invoked, most mighty and noble, her
father.
None among mortal men, nor the gods whose life is
eternal,
Heard her voice—not even the fruitful Nymphs of the
marsh-land.
Only Perses' daughter, the tender-hearted, had heard her,
Hecatè, she of the gleaming coronet, out of her cavern,—
Heard her on Kronides calling, her father: he from im-
mortals
Far was sitting aloof, in a fane where many petitions
Came to him, mingled with sacrifices abundant of mortals.

"So, at the bidding of Zeus was reluctant Persephone stolen,
Forced by her father's brother, the Many-named, offspring
of Kronos,
Lord and Receiver of all mankind—with his horses im-
mortal.
While Persephone yet could look upon star-studded heaven,
Gaze on the earth underneath, and the swarming waters
unresting,

Seeing the light, so long she had hope that her glorious mother
Yet would descry her—or some from the race of the gods ever-living.
So long hope consoled her courageous spirit in trouble.
Loudly the crests of the mountains and depths of the water resounded
Unto her deathless voice:—and her royal mother did hear her.
Keen was the pain at Demeter's heart, and about her ambrosial
Tresses her tender hands were rending her beautiful wimple.
Dusky the garment was that she cast upon both her shoulders."

(Black robes were already the sign of grief in the Iliad. For example, they are worn in Il. xxiv. by Thetis, of whom the younger poet borrows many touches for his Mourning Mother. For instance, he has just echoed the words which announce her first appearance in Il. i., arising out of the sea at Achilles' call—

"And his royal mother did hear him.")

"Like to a bird she darted, and over the lands and the waters
Sped as if frenzied: but yet there was no one willing to tell her

Truthfully, neither of gods nor of human folk who are mortal;
None of the birds would come unto her as a messenger faithful."

Mother Nature understands with equal ease the voices of all her children; though this is a truth which should least of all need repetition, in an age made happy by the immortal creation of Mowgli and his companions.

"So throughout nine days, over earth imperial Deo,
Holding in both her hands her flaming torches, was roaming.
Never ambrosia, nor ever delightsome nectar she tasted;
Never she bathed with water her body—so bitter her sorrow.
Yet when upon her there came for the tenth time glimmering morning,
Hecatè met her, a shining light in her hands, and addrest her,
Speaking unto her thus, and bringing her news of her daughter:
'Royal Demeter, our Bountiful Lady, the Giver of Spring-time,
Who among mortal men, or who of the gods ever-living,
Brought this grief to your heart by stealing Persephone from you?

Truly her voice did I hear, but yet with my eyes I beheld not
Who committed the deed. Thus all have I truthfully told you.'
So did Hecatè speak, and in words replied not the other,
Fair-tressed Rheia's daughter, but hastily with her she darted,
Hurrying forward, and still in her hands were the glimmering torches."

These torches are "still in her hands," also, in many works of plastic art which have been preserved. The torch played a prominent part too in the solemn processions and figurative ceremonies of Eleusis.

"So they to Helios came, who is watcher of gods and of mortals.
Standing in front of his steeds, she, divine among goddesses, asked him:
'Helios, you as a goddess should hold me in honour, if ever
Either by word or deed I have cheered your heart and your spirit.
I through boundless ether have heard the lament of a maiden,
Even of her that I bore, fair blossom, of glorious beauty:
Heard her cry of distress, though not with my eyes I beheld her.

Yet do you, who descry all earth and the billowy waters,
Out of the ether resplendent with keen glance watchfully downward
Gazing, report to me truly, my child, if perchance you behold her.
Tell me who among men, or of gods, whose life is unending,
Seized, and away from her mother has carried, the maiden unwilling.'

"So did she speak; and the son of Hyperion answered her, saying:
'Fair-tressed Rheia's daughter, our royal lady Demeter,
You shall know: for indeed I pity and greatly revere you,
Seeing you grieved for your child, for the graceful Persephone. No one
Else save cloud-wrapt Zeus is to blame among all the immortals.
He as a blooming bride has given your daughter to Hades,
Brother to him and to you: so down to the shadowy darkness
Hades, spite of her cries, has dragged her away with his horses.
Yet, O goddess, abate your grief: it befits you in no wise
Thus insatiate anger to cherish. Nor yet an unworthy
Husband among the immortals is Hades, monarch of all men,
Child of the selfsame father and mother with you: and his honours

Fell to his share, when first amid three was the universe parted.
Still amid those he reigns, whose rule unto him was allotted.'"

A doctrine hard indeed, yet true. Death is verily the brother of Life, to be welcomed no less than the other as a rightful guest among us.

"Speaking thus he aroused his steeds: and they at his bidding,
Nimbly as long-winged birds with the rushing chariot hastened.
Over Demeter's heart grief fiercer and keener descended.
Then in her anger at Kronos' son, who is lord of the storm-cloud,
Leaving the gathering-place of the gods and spacious Olympos,
Unto the cities of men and the fertile fields she departed."

From this point the tenderest human sympathies blend more and more with the marvellous elements of the divine myth.

"Many a day was her form disguised: and of those who beheld her,
No one, whether of men or of dames deep-girded, could know her.

So had she fared, till she came to the prudent Keleos' dwelling;
He was the ruler then of Eleusis abounding in incense."

The epithet given to Eleusis is partly anticipatory.

"Close to the road she took her seat, sore troubled in spirit,
Nigh to a sacred well, whence water was drawn by the townsfolk.
There in the shadow she sat of an olive thicket above her,
Taking upon her the form of an aged woman, who travail
Never may know, nor the gifts of garlanded Aphrodite,
Such as the ancient dames and nurses who care for the children,
Dwelling within the resounding halls of governing monarchs.
There she was seen by the daughters of Keleos, lord of Eleusis.
They with their pitchers of bronze were come to the fountain for water,
Easily drawn, to be fetched to the pleasant abode of their father:
—Four, like goddesses, having the bloom of maidenly beauty,
Kleisidikè and Kallidikè and beautiful Demo,
Kallithoè, too, youngest and last. They knew not Demeter;
—Difficult is it in truth for the gods to be known by us, mortals,—

Standing close at her side with wingèd words they addrest her:
'Whence do you come, old dame, from the folk of a past generation?
Why, thus, apart from the town do you fare, and unto the dwellings
Come not nigh, where dames in the shadowy halls are abiding—
Some as agèd as you yourself—and others are younger?
They with words, and in deed no less, would accord you a welcome.'
So did they speak, and to them the imperial goddess responded:
'Children dear, whosoever you are among women, I greet you.
Yes, and your question I'll answer; indeed it is only befitting,
Since you have asked me this, that I should truthfully tell you.'"

But the divine guest has not sworn by the Stygian stream, and the mystic name she gives herself is perhaps the only word not untruthful in her reply.

"'Deo my name is: upon me my reverend mother bestowed it.
Over the sea's broad back from Crete I hither have wandered;

Not of my own free will, but by need and compulsion, unwilling
Hither by pirates brought: and they at Thorikos lately
Ran their vessel ashore. Then many a captive woman,
Many a pirate too, was fain to set foot on the mainland.
There by the stern of the ship their evening meal they provided.
Yet the delightful supper was nowise dear to my spirit.
Hastening forth unseen, I traversed the shadowy mainland,
Fleeing my insolent lords, that they, who never had bought me,
Might not sell me and win for themselves my value hereafter.
So in my wanderings hither to you am I come; and I know not
What is the land, nor who are the people within it abiding.
Yet unto you may all who make their abode in Olympos
Grant you husbands, in wedlock, and make you the mothers of children
Such as parents crave; but do you show pity upon me,
Gentle maidens, in kindness, until I may come to the dwelling
Either of lady or lord, for whom I may eagerly labour,
Doing the tasks that fall to a woman as aged as I am.'
Either a new-born child I could hold in my arms, and could nurse him
Wisely and well, or else could keep in order the household;

Yes, and the bed could I lay for the lords, in the well-built
chambers,
Inner recesses—or teach their handicraft to the women.'

"Thus did the goddess speak. Straight answered the maiden
unwedded,
Kallidikê, who was fairest of face among Keleos' daughters:
'Mother, the gifts of the gods, though bitter our sorrow, we
mortals
Must perforce endure, since they are by far more mighty.'"

Here, as often, we catch an echo of Nausicaa's accents.

"'This, however, to you will I clearly explain, and will tell
you
As to the men who here have a larger measure of honour:
Chiefs of our people are they, and the towering walls of
the city
They with their counsels hold secure, and righteous deci-
sions.
First Triptolemos wise in counsel, and also Dioclos,
Polyxeinos next I name, and noble Eumolpos,
Dolichos, too, and lastly our own illustrious father.
—All have wedded wives, who keep in order their house-
holds.
No one of all these dames—not even when first she shall
see you,

Holding you in disdain would debar you out of her dwelling.
Nay, they will welcome you:—since you are verily like the immortals.'"

The gods, in early poetry, seem constantly in danger of betraying their superhuman beauty or power. The mask of humility, or age, or wretchedness, is always slipping aside.

"'But if you will, here tarry until to the house of my father
We may come, and tell deep-girt Metaneira, my mother,
All that to us has befallen. It may be then she will bid you
Into our home to come, nor seek for the dwelling of others.
There in her well-built palace a son, most dearly-beloved,
Late-born, prayed-for long, and eagerly welcome, is nourished.
If you would care for him till he comes to the threshold of manhood,
Verily every one of women who then may behold you
Not without envy may see the rewards you may win for his rearing.'

"Such were her words. With a nod did the goddess assent, and the maidens
Filled their shining urns with water, and bore them, exultant.

Nimbly they came to their father's strong-built mansion, and quickly
Told their mother of all they had seen and heard: and the mother
Straightway bade them invite her to come, at wages unbounded.
Then did the maidens—as deer, or as calves in the season of springtime
Gambol the meadows along, when delighted at heart with the pasture,
—So they darted, uplifting the folds of their beautiful garments,
Down by the hollowed way for the wagons: their tresses about them,
Like to the crocus blossom, were floating over their shoulders.
There, at the side of the way, they found the illustrious goddess
Where they had left her before. Then toward the house of their father
They led onward; and she—distressed in spirit—behind them
Followed along, with her face close veiled; and her garments about her
Duskily fell in waves to the glistening feet of the goddess.
Soon to the palace of Zeus-supported Keleos came they.
Then through a porch they went their way, for the reverend mother
There, in the well-built hall, by a pillar was sitting, and holding

On her lap her boy, that blossom so tender. The maidens
Ran to her side: but the goddess immovable stood at the threshold.
Nigh to the lintel she towered, and with radiance filled was the portal.
Shame and awe fell, then, and terror, upon Metaneira.
Out of her chair she arose, and bade the new-comer be seated.
Yet Demeter, the Bringer of Spring, the Bestower of bounty,
Was not willing to take her place in the glistening arm-chair,
But with her beautiful eyes cast down, and silent, she lingered:
Lingered at least, so long, till cunning Iambè before her
Set her a firm-wrought chair—and a white fleece laid she upon it.
Then Demeter was seated, and drew her veil with her fingers.
Speechless upon her chair full long she sate, and in sorrow.
Greeting to no one there she accorded, by word or by gesture:
But, unsmiling, refusing to taste of food or of liquid,
Sate she, wasted away by desire for her daughter deep-girded;
—Till at the last, with her jests full many, the cunning Iambè,
Scoffing, diverted the holy Demeter, the reverend goddess,

So that she smiled, then laughed, and took on a cheerier spirit.
(She, too, often thereafter delighted her heart when in anger.)"

"The allegory," as Dante would say, "grows thin at this point." Iambè is scoffing Jest personified, and she had indeed a traditional prominence amid the statelier features of the mysteries.

"Then Metaneira proffered her honey-sweet wine, in a goblet,
Filling it: yet she her head tossed back in refusal, declaring
This was forbidden for her, to quaff of the wine: but she bade her
Barley and water to give her, commingled with soft penny-royal.
She made ready and offered the goddess the draught she had ordered.
—Still is the gift she accepted the portion of reverend Deo."

And the Chthonian gods generally are austere gods, to whom no libations of wine are welcome. Oedipus' greeting to the "wineless goddesses" at Colonos is as familiar a passage as any.

"Straightway among them began and spoke fair-girt Metaneira:
'Welcome, oh woman! assuredly not from parents unworthy
You are sprung, but a noble race: in your eyes so clearly
Grace and modesty shine, as in those of imperial princes.'"

Is it the tradition of the Homeric school that makes this Attic and, perhaps, democratic poet, such a firm believer in the nobility of royal races?

"'Still, what the gods ordain, though bitter our sorrow, we mortals
Must perforce endure: to our necks their yoke has been fitted.
Now that to us you are come, let your share be as mine is in all things.
Rear for me this boy, who, late in life and unhoped-for,
Was of the gods bestowed, as an answer to many petitions.
If you would care for him, till he come to the threshold of manhood,
Verily every one of women, who then may behold you,
Would with envy see the rewards you may win for his rearing.'
Then unto her, in turn, fair-crowned Demeter responded:
'Greeting to you, too, lady; the gods all blessings accord you!
Gladly will I accept your child, as you have commanded,
Yes, I will rear him: nor shall he, methinks, through his nurse's unwisdom

Either by accident come unto harm, or by venomous poison.'
So as she spoke, in her arms immortal she took him, and clasped him
Unto her fragrant bosom: the mother was gladdened in spirit.

"So Demophoön, glorious son of the valorous Keleos,
Whom Metaneira had borne, by Demeter was reared in the palace.
Like to a god he throve, for he drew not milk from his mother,
Neither of bread did he eat, but with ambrosia Demeter
Ever anointed the child, like one that a god had begotten,
Breathing sweetly upon him, and holding him close to her bosom.
Every night in the fire like a brand she covered him over.
This his affectionate parents knew not: and greatly they marvelled,
Since so stately he grew, and like to the gods was his semblance.
She would have made him immortal as well, and ageless for ever:
But by her folly the mother, fair-robed Metaneira, prevented,
Watching by night, and peering forth from her odorous chamber.
Then upon both her thighs she smote, and shrieked in her terror,

—Such was her fear for her son,—and was utterly frenzied
in spirit.
Then she lamented aloud, and in wingèd words she addrest
him:
'Child of mine, Demophoön, surely the stranger has hid
thee
Deep in the fire, and bitterest trouble and grief she has
caused me.'
So in her sorrow aloud she spoke,—and the goddess had
heard her.
Then in her wrath at the mother, the fair-crowned goddess
Demeter
Threw to the earth from her arms immortal that infant
belovèd,
Plucking him forth from the fire, in spirit exceedingly
wrathful."

We, however, can hardly blame the mother's fears. Though the long hymn is little more than half rendered, this is perhaps as good a point as any to break off: the more as in the latter portion the text is in bad condition, while the story follows a more conventional form of the familiar myth. At least, there is less of the peculiarly tender human sympathy so noticeable in the earlier portions. Demeter, departing from the palace in all her divine majesty, bids the

Eleusinians erect a temple in her honour. Within it she takes up her abode, refusing her presence and blessing to gods or men.

"Many the ploughs that in vain by the oxen were drawn in the corn-land,
Vainly into the earth white barley was cast in abundance."

After all the gods had come to plead with her, to no purpose, Zeus is forced to send and bid Pluto release Persephone. Here we have—for the first time—the familiar incident of the pomegranate seed slily divided by Pluto with the unwilling guest. It seems like an allusion to some usage by which the voluntary sharing of food by the bride under her lord's roof is to be considered as an essential consummation of wedlock. Persephone must, therefore, spend one part of the year with her husband in the nether gloom, but may tarry two parts above in the sunshine. These are, of course, the *three* seasons of the year, as the Greeks distinguish them.

The "orgies," or mysteries, (naturally in the form ever after observed at Eleusis,) are now revealed by Demeter to the chief rulers of the

land,—among whom Triptolemos is barely mentioned. The nature of the ceremonial is not indicated, indeed the divine injunction of absolute secrecy is emphatically repeated. That the ceremonies were peculiarly efficacious, if not essential to salvation, may be gathered from these earnest words:—

"Blessed is he, whosoever of men on earth may behold them.
He who hath entered not, nor shared in the ritual, nowise
Equally happy his doom, when dead, in the terrible darkness" (vers. 481–483).

At once thereafter Demeter and her daughter take their due places in the great Olympian council.

"There they abide at the side of Zeus, who delighteth in thunder;
Holy are they, and dread. Most happy is he whosoever
Dear to their hearts may become, among men who on earth have abiding.
Quickly they send him,—to dwell in his stately home at his hearthside,—
Plutus, who is the giver of wealth unto men that are mortal" (vers. 486–490).

The long hymn ends—as does the first Olympian ode of Pindar—with a note of modest consciousness that the singer deserves his reward.

"Come, oh thou who protectest the folk of fragrant Eleusis,
—Rock-bound Antron, too, and Paros girt by the waters,—
Thou and thy daughter as well, most beautiful Persephoneia,
Kindly accord, in return for my singing, a life of contentment.
—Yet I of you not alone, but of other song will be mindful" (vers. 491–496).

Thus the poem closes, like so many of these Hymns or Preludes, with a transitional note. In this case, however, we can hardly accept the suggestion, and may be tempted to cancel the last verse. Surely this poem of five hundred hexameter lines is too stately, and too absorbing in interest, to have been merely a prelude to the epic recital that should follow.

VII.

HEXAMETER IN THE HANDS OF THE PHILOSOPHERS.

(Xenophanes, Parmenides, Empedocles.)

Among the early Greek philosophers there were at least three, each of whom in succession used the hexameter verse, and epic dialect, for his poem on the origin and nature of things. At any rate, all three poems bore among later Greeks the title, Περὶ Φύσεως, of which Lucretius' caption, "De Rerum Naturâ," may be considered a translation. The earliest of the trio, Xenophanes, was a native of Colophon in Asia Minor, one of Homer's earlier birthplaces. Moreover, Xenophanes is said to have celebrated the founding of his native city, as well as the comparatively recent colonization of Elea in Italy, in brief epic poems. While Xenophanes thus shows himself a true Homerid, he will require

mention elsewhere also as an elegiac poet of moderate powers. His hexameter verses still surviving make but a handful of fragments, the most famous of which is by no means in a subservient tone toward the great heads of the school:—

"Everything is ascribed to the gods by Hesiod and Homer,
Whatsoever among mankind is shameful and wicked.
Numberless lawless deeds of the gods by them are recorded,
Thievishness, unchastity, ay, and deceit of each other!"

To the whole anthropomorphic conception of the divine nature this philosopher offers fearless and scornful opposition:—

"Still men hold the belief that the gods were born and begotten,
Wear such garb as themselves, and have like bodies, and voices, . . .
Yet it is certain, if hands were bestowed upon oxen or lions,
If with their hands they could draw, and the works of men should accomplish,—
Horses like unto horses, and oxen in likeness of oxen,
So would they draw their figures of gods, and fashion the bodies
Like in every way to their own!"

Passages are often quoted, however, from Xenophanes, as if they proved a pure monotheistic philosophy, which hardly require that interpretation. Thus, even the devout Aeschylos might apply to his own Zeus, without misgiving, such words as—

"There is a single god, amid gods most mighty, and mortals,
Nowise like unto men in outward form, nor in spirit."

Even his own assertions, upon superhuman themes, the sage would bid us receive with a grain of agnosticism :—

"Truth itself no man hath attained, nor shall he attain it,
Neither as to the gods, nor all whereof I am speaking.
Yea, though what he shall utter may seem most perfect and finished,
Yet he himself knows not: for opinion is ruler in all things."

Still, to the patient waiting student of to-day, there comes a cheery word from this far pioneer of thought—

"Nowise all was revealed by the gods at the first unto mortals,
But in the course of time, by seeking, they better discover."

We have still a few reminders, also, from him,

that the stately epic verse could bend to more familiar tones :—

"Thus it is fitting to speak, in the winter time, by the fireside,
When we have eaten our fill, on a soft divan are reclining,
Quaffing the mellow wine, and meantime munching the sweetmeats:
'Who among men art thou, and thy years how many, good fellow?'"

There could hardly be a clearer glimpse of the unhesitating hospitality—spiced with a lively curiosity—which, as the old Assians will all testify, is not yet a lost virtue among Asiatic Greeks. Most of the more familiar tones of Xenophanes must be reserved for the later volume in which we shall hope to treat the elegiac movement with the rest of the Greek lyric. We must attempt, however, even here, to echo that elusive rhythm for a single quatrain, if only to let the hale old poet and wandering scholar answer the question which his host just put him :—

"'Seven and sixty years already I widely have wandered,
Through the Hellenic land strewing the seed of my thought.

Twenty the years of my life ere that, and five in addition,
If I am able to speak truthfully as to my age.'"

Lucian practically vouches for the veracity of this tale of years, including Xenophanes among his "Macrobioi," or long-lived folk, with a crown of one and ninety winters. His death was probably late in the sixth century B.C.; but for a biography of him little or no data remain.

Since Xenophanes is called the founder of the Eleatic school of philosophy, he doubtless spent many years, either as a colonist and citizen, or at least as an honoured guest, in the Italian city. Here, in Elea, also, Parmenides was born, about 500 B.C. The Platonic Socrates speaks with awe of his venerable figure, as a far memory from his own Athenian boyhood. Like his predecessor, Parmenides was chiefly interested in seeking the sources and limitations of scientific knowledge. His great poem, or treatise in verse, was a frigid allegory, wherein Sophia (Wisdom), entertaining the philosopher in her rather gloomy stronghold, delivered an interminable lecture under two chief heads: viz. Truth; and the false opinions of her among men, based on the deceptive order of her

own words. We shall be quite content to transcribe merely the exordium from this Johnsonian flight of the Muse! Even the famous introduction is too confused, and too heavy, to be fully and faithfully rendered. It seems probable that the transcribers are to blame, in part, for the confused clauses and the wearisome repetitions. But Parmenides himself sags heavily in poetic flight. *E.g.* the verb "bear" (*φέρω*) occurs in the first and fourth verses, and in the fifth line twice!

"Steeds that bore me along, so far as my spirit might venture,
Since they had carried me into the far-famed path of the goddess,
Even of her who in all things guideth the wise unto knowledge. . . .
There I arrived, since thither the horses of thought had conveyed me,
Whirling the chariot on: and maidens guided my journey
Unto the light, unwinding the veils that had covered their foreheads:
Maidens, Helios' daughters, who came from the dwelling of darkness.
There are the gates whence issue the paths of Night and of Daylight.

Stone their threshold, and stone is a lintel also above them.
Yet is the gateway lofty, and fitted with ponderous portals.
Justice, a mighty avenger, possesses the keys that unloose them.
Then did the maidens beseeching with gentle voices persuade her
Skilfully, begging that she would draw back the bolt of the portal. . . .
Heartily there did the goddess receive me. She with her right hand
Clasped mine own, as she spoke these words: and thus she addrest me:
'Youth, who with charioteers immortal art come a companion,
Thou who, by horses drawn, art arrived at my habitation,
Welcome! and nowise evil the destiny hither that brings thee.
Verily far from the tracks of men is the 'path thou hast followed.'"

Any eager interest we would fain feel in Sophia's lecture is heavily drugged by her own prompt avowal, that it matters not at what point she may begin, since she must return perpetually to the one essential thought. This her favourite goal is, moreover, the most unpoetic, if philosophic, truth, that Existence and Non-existence are absolutely diverse!

We may well imagine that the sway of hexameter was tyrannous, when such a man moulded such material into dactylic verse. In truth, he undoubtedly did so simply because he neither found prepared for him, nor was able to devise, any easier form in which to give his thought a permanent expression. Any other regular rhythm would have been yet more unfamiliar and recalcitrant: artistic prose was not yet developed.

Still, even Parmenides is a Greek, and co-heir of his Hellenic artistic inheritance. So even from his lips the rhythm is heard, unmistakably, though in monotonous and breathless fashion. The thought, too, or rather the phrase, already shaped to his hand by centuries of artists, insists upon being poetical at times, in spite of him. It is through a single verse, however, and that, too, sober enough in its intention, that Parmenides lives for poets and lovers of sentiment:—

"Eros before all other divinities first she created."

The subject of the verb was, as Plato indicates, Genesis (Creative power), or, according to another authority, Aphrodite—which in Parmenides'

transparent allegory would probably mean much the same. It will be at once remembered that the atheistic Lucretius actually begins his rigidly materialistic account of creation with a splendid invocation of Venus. No doubt she, also, was but the poetic personification of creative force, yet Lucretius' irrepressible imagination, spurred apparently by national pride as well, makes the mother of Aeneas very real for us, if not for him.

To Parmenides' barren Eleatic philosophy we need not return, since it is only as a far and rather feeble disciple of the Homeric school in verse that he appears here at all.

Moreover, the last of our philosophic trio is a figure infinitely more brilliant and imposing. Indeed, among all the thronging figures of the past there are few characters more picturesque, few whom we would more gladly summon forth from the shades to respond to our eager questioning—than Empedocles of Acragas: "Empedocles of Aetna"!

Lucretius, chief of surviving didactic and philosophic poets, takes occasion to refer to Empedocles (De Rerum Naturâ, i. 717 ff.) in noble and

famous lines. Among all the wonders Sicily has produced, he says, "naught is more illustrious or holy, nothing more wondrous and precious, than this man. His poems moreover," Lucretius declares, "utter and expound his glorious discoveries, so that he seems hardly sprung of human stock." This characterization is evidently just. Empedocles the philosopher scarcely concerns us here, though by his discovery, if such we may call it, of the four elements, he became the father of all later ancient and even mediaeval science. But he was, above all else, as Lucretius indicates, a true poet. The four hundred and eighty hexameters which have been preserved suffice to reveal his high creative imagination, as well as the splendid march of his verse. Indeed his poem, if extant entire, would perhaps overshadow Lucretius' great work.

Empedocles' life was cast in the fifth century B.C.—the golden age of historical Greece,—and chiefly in the Sicilian city of Acragas or, as the Romans called it, Agrigentum. He evidently enjoyed hereditary wealth, as the grandfather whose name he bore won the four-horse chariot

race at Olympia, probably about the time of the poet's birth, in the first decade of the fifth century. Twenty years later, Empedocles' father, Meton, was a leader in expelling the Agrigentine tyrant Thrasidaeus. Still later, after Meton's death, we are told, the royal power was offered to the poet, and by him refused. Subsequently he became unpopular, went into exile, and probably died, like Dante, without ever seeing again the city of his birth.

Even so much as this we must piece together from late and often discordant statements. The grave and haughty spirit clearly revealed in his poems would naturally bring him into conflict with the ignobler ideas of the folk: but no connected thread of biography can now be traced. The most famous incident of all is the familiar one of his death: that he secretly leaped into the crater of Aetna, in order that his disciples might believe he had been miraculously translated from earth. The legend adds, that the volcano mocked him by throwing out one of his sandals, thus exposing the trick. This irony of Fate doubtless betrays the romantic origin of the

legend itself, which Matthew Arnold has hardly succeeded in vivifying.

Empedocles was without doubt a leader of mystics, but it seems equally true—as true as of Plato, of Swedenborg, or of Emerson—that he was his own first and sincerest believer. In particular, the lines in which he declares his recollections of immortality, and of a more blest divine existence, are as earnest as anything in Plato or in Wordsworth.

"There is a doom of fate, an ancient decree of immortals,
Never to be unmade, by amplest pledges attested:
That, if a spirit divine, who shares in the life everlasting,
Through transgression defiles his glorious body by blood-shed,
Or if he perjure himself by swearing unto a falsehood,
Thrice ten thousand seasons he wanders apart from the Blessèd,
Passing from birth unto birth through every species of mortal;
Changing ever the paths of life, yet ever unresting:
Even as I now roam, from gods far-wandered, an exile,
Yielding to maddening strife."

These, as Plutarch and others testify, are the opening lines in the Prelude of Empedocles'

great poem on Nature. Other and briefer fragments continue the same train of thought.

"Once already have I as a youth been born, as a maiden,
Bush, and wingèd bird, and silent fish in the waters. . . .
After what honours, and after how long and blissful existence,
Thus am I wretchedly doomed to abide in the meadows of mortals!
Loudly I wept and wailed at beholding the place unfamiliar . . .
. . . Joyless the place, where
Murder abides and Strife, with the other races of Troubles."

Indeed the belief in transmigration, which we are wont to associate especially with the Pythagorean teachings, is nowhere more earnestly and vividly expressed than by Empedocles. The conviction that man's soul is a fallen exile from a higher diviner sphere, to which he may hope to return only after long purgatorial atonement in earthly incarnations—all this has been even more magnificently elaborated in Platonic dialogues like the Phaedrus and the Phaedo; but Plato himself may well owe much of his loftiest inspiration to this Sicilian seer.

The theory of the four elements is clearly stated in a three-line fragment of the same Prelude:—

"Hearken and learn, that four, at the first, are the sources of all things:
Fire, and water, and earth, and lofty ether unbounded.
Thence springs all that is, that shall be, or hath been aforetime."

Empedocles seems to have rivalled Lucretius himself in the picturesque vividness of his similes. Here, for instance, is an attempt to illustrate how the manifold forms of the visible world might well arise from the mingling of these few elements.

"Just as men who the painter's craft have thoroughly mastered
Fashion in many a tint their picture, an offering sacred;
When they have taken in hand their paints of various colours,
Mingling skilfully more of the one and less of another,
Out of these they render the figures like unto all things;
Trees they cause to appear, and the semblance of men and of women,
Beasts of the field, and birds, and fish that inhabit the waters,
Even the gods whose honours are greatest, whose life is unending:

—Be not deceived, for such, and nowise other, the fountain
Whence all mortals spring, whatever their races unnumbered."

Incidentally we see clearly, that, while the painter's art has made many a stride from Homer's time to Empedocles' day, yet "Art is still religion;" the masterpiece is (as a matter of course) an *anathema*, an altar-piece.

Among the other fragments of the Proem is the singular invocation of the Muse, which is most difficult to turn into English verse, as it demands absolute faithfulness in rendering. It may be confessed, too, that the poetic quality is rather disappointing. Unlike most transcendental philosophers, Empedocles insists that men—at least, other men, if not himself—must rely simply and solely on the evidence of their senses concerning all material things. Moreover, despite his hatred of Strife, he has evidently just indulged in rather strong polemic, probably against those who profess to teach more than man may know; for the invocation begins thus:—

"Only do ye, oh gods, remove from my tongue their madness;
Make ye to flow from a mouth that is holy a fountain unsullied.
Thou, oh white-armed Virgin, the Muse who rememberest all things,
Whatsoe'er it is lawful to utter to men that are mortal
Bring me, from Piety driving a chariot easily-guided."

It is clear, from many such passages, that Empedocles claimed for himself not merely a poetic inspiration, but an absolutely superhuman nature. It is not easy to find anywhere a more magnificent and sublime egotism than his. The most famous passage of this character is not from his great work on Nature (or Creation), but is found in the "Katharmoi" (Poems of Purification):—

"Oh, my friends, whoso in Acragas' beautiful city
Have your dwelling aloft, whose hearts are set upon virtue,
Reverent harbours of guests, who have no share in dishonour,
Greeting! But I as a god divine, no longer a mortal,
Dwell with you, by all in reverence held, as is fitting,
Girt with fillets about, and crowned with wreaths of rejoicing.

Whatsoever the folk whose prosperous cities I enter,
There I of women and men am revered. By thousands they follow,
Questioning where they may seek for the path that leadeth to profit.
These are in need of prophetic words; and others, in illness,
Since they have long been racked with the grievous pangs of diseases,
Crave that I utter the charm whose power is sovran in all things.
—Yet, pray, why lay stress upon this, as were it a marvel
If I surpass mankind, who are mortal and utterly wretched?"

The scientific discoveries of Empedocles seem really to have been, like those of Paracelsus, much in advance of his age. As for his attempt to retrace the processes of creation, much in it, of course, seems to us crude and even childish. There are indications, however, that he saw more clearly than his Roman pupil the great distinction between *matter* and *force*. He would, perhaps, hardly have thought of sound, and heat or cold, as delicate *substances* piercing through the pores of coarser matter—a belief Lucretius teaches and adorns with most exquisite imagery! Empedocles certainly did assert, however, that all

bodies actually give off "films," or thin images of themselves, which, striking the human eye, produce the effect of sight. Still, many such apparently crude statements may have been largely dictated by the tyranny of poetic diction, and the lack, as yet, of any scientific terminology.

The preservation of so considerable a mass of verse from Empedocles—and from him only—among all the early philosophers, is doubtless a tribute, even if only a half-conscious one, to his high poetic quality. That alone, or at least chiefly, not his philosophic system, concerns us here, as has already been remarked. This body of verse would, however, make an excellent subject for an English monograph by a classical scholar with scientific interests.

EPILOGUE.

THE preceding chapters have measurably covered that mass of poetry which may properly be described as "Homeric" in dialect, metre, and, perhaps, in general spirit, and which was created in the centuries from the completion of the Odyssey down to the middle of the Attic period—let us say from 800 to 400 B.C. Many other poems are mentioned, or even quoted, in later authors, which may have deserved inclusion here; but they are of uncertain date and unknown character, surviving only in the scantiest fragments. It has not been thought best to mention them at all in so general a view.

The history of the hexameter by no means ends at this point. The important revival of archaic epic in Alexandria, the bucolic school of

Theocritus, and, in general, the later developments, we may, perhaps, hope to discuss hereafter. Its prevailing use in epitaphs shows that the hexameter was always familiar and beloved, as might be expected among a people for whom Homer so long remained almost a Bible. Many Athenians, for instance, knew the whole Iliad and Odyssey by heart, and the Platonic Socrates employs a Homeric phrase or an archaic word, such as "the forceless heads of the dead," for local colour, as a modern English essayist uses "fardels," or "still-vext Bermoothes."

The body of post-Homeric verse described in the present volume never attained the same popularity; nor is the chief cause far to seek. The Iliad and Odyssey present on the whole a picture almost as remote from historic Hellas as it is from us. There may or may not have been in earlier ages such figures as Achilles and Hector, Helen and Nausicaa; but at any rate their chariots and their chivalry were as unrelated to the actual daily experience of Lysias and Isocrates as to that of Burke and Pitt. Hence their supreme charm. They make, and

they have always made, a resistless appeal to the imagination.

"Ewig jung allein ist Phantasie."

Homer, too, sang, apparently, for the pure delight of singing. Any ethical impulse or meaning is forgotten, or merged, in the delineation of truly beautiful and heroic figures or scenes. True art may unconsciously teach as much as you please, but it must not consciously preach!

The mass of poetry here treated is, on the contrary, philosophic, didactic, self-conscious, and, in the intention at least, largely realistic. Even the Prometheus Firebearer of Hesiod was a part of the regular Attic belief and cult. The maxims of the Works and Days were fitted for the practical guidance of the peasant at his plough, and the trader on the sea. The Hymns were doubtless in actual use, at least locally, in oft-recurring rituals and at stated festival-times. Even in discussing the very early Delian hymn, we had occasion to remark upon the local and personal, even egotistical, tone which makes it distinctly un-Homeric. In some cases the very

text of these works has probably suffered severely because of this very nearness to contemporary life. The Iliad we read, doubtless, essentially as Pisistratus read it. It was already an heirloom from an earlier Hellas, not to be rudely touched or added to by alien hands. But into the Works and Days, as into the corpus of Theognis' didactic poetry, almost any commonplace or maxim could be introduced.

Nevertheless, it is believed the subject-matter of this little volume has a unity, an interest, and, in particular, a close dependence on the masterpieces of Ionic epic, justifying its treatment under the title here chosen. It is less alive, less essential to the comprehension of the age in which it arose, than the Greek lyric of the same centuries. The tantalizing and, on the whole, scanty remains of that lyric, from Callinus to Simonides, would require at least another volume like the present one.

FINIS.

PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
LONDON AND BECCLES.

LD 21–100m-8,'34